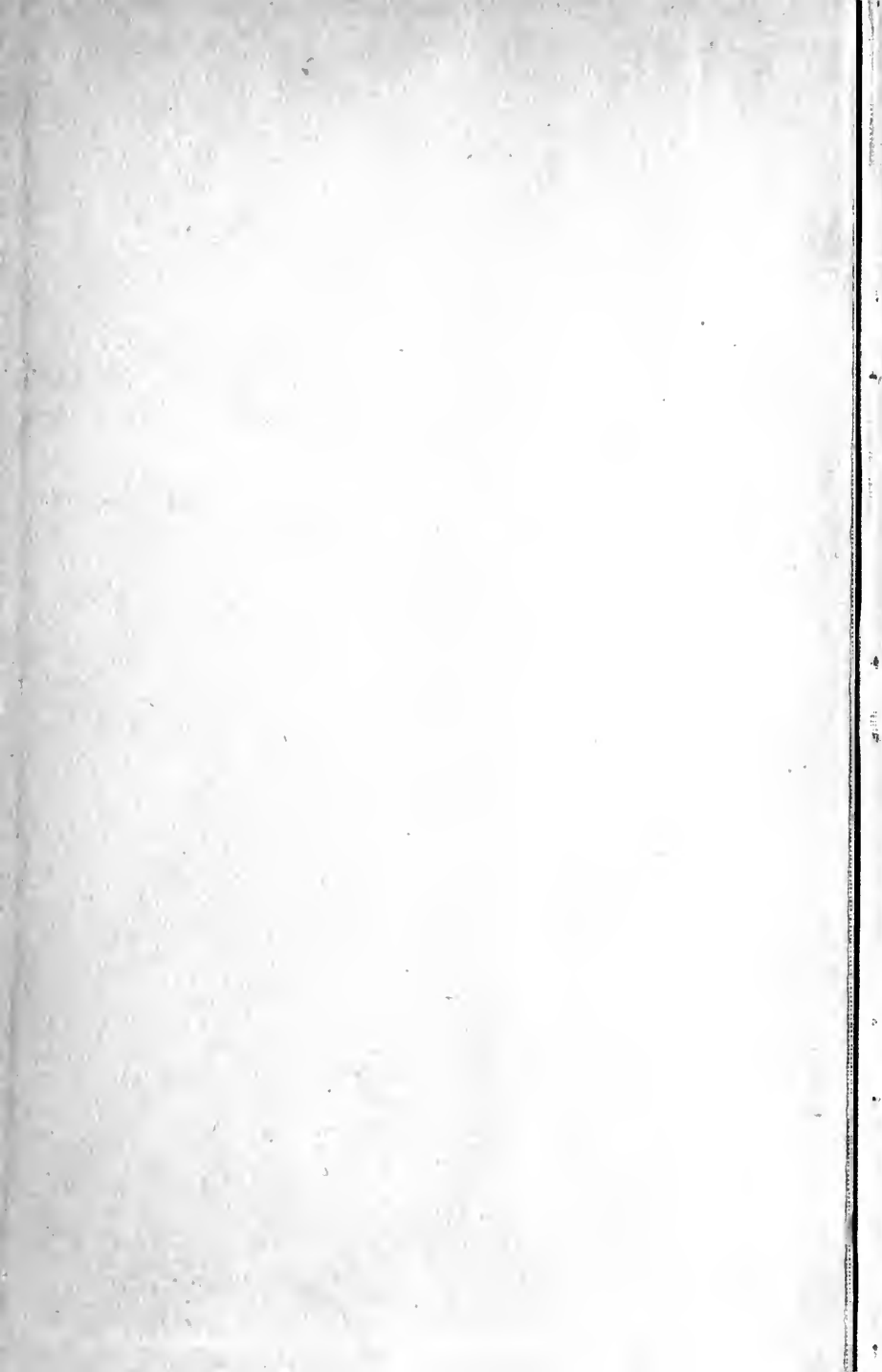


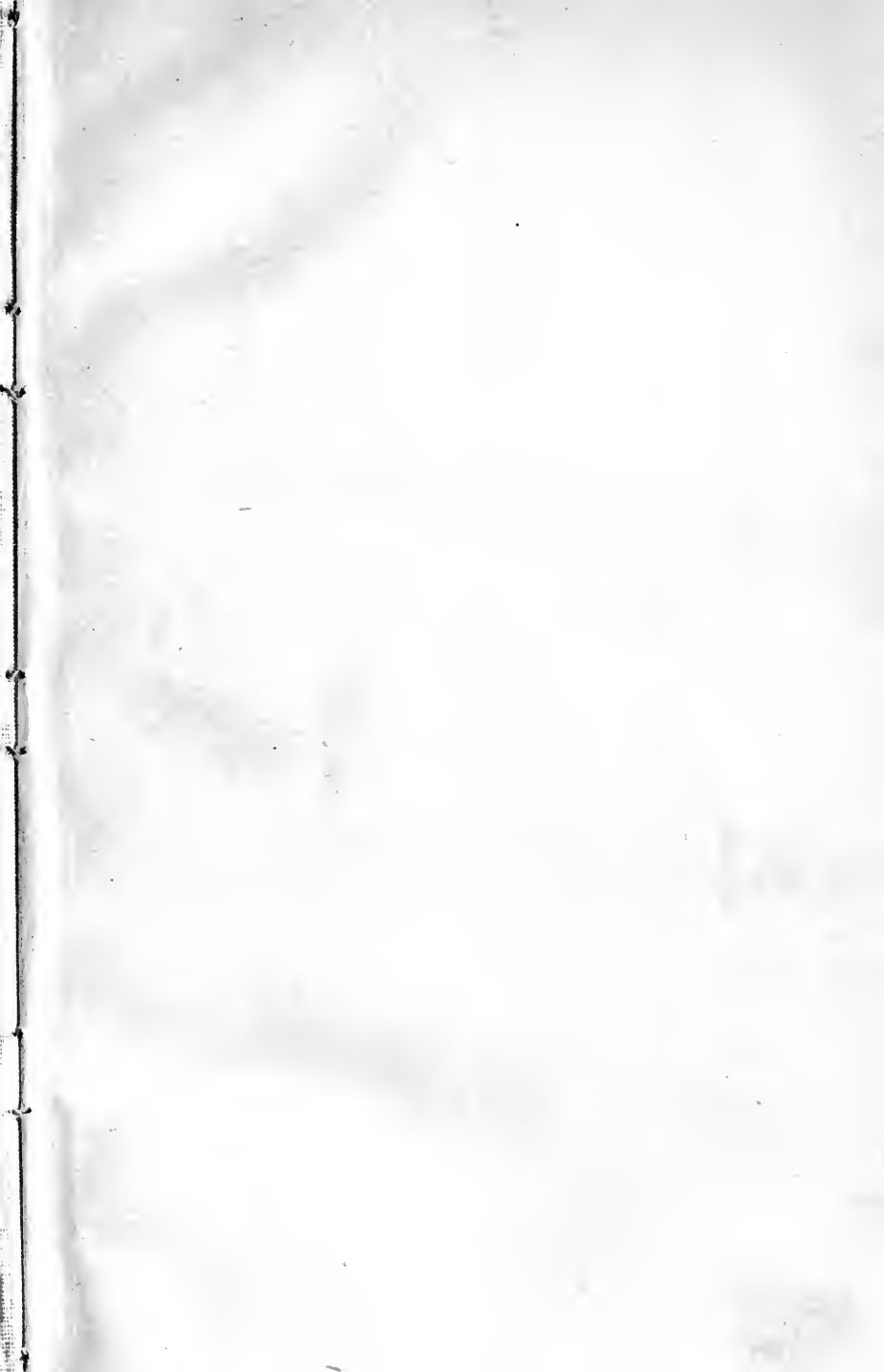
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THE

Ellesmere MS

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

[*The Ellesmere woodcuts are to be put opposite the beginnings of the Tales (not Prologues) they respectively belong to, as shown by the italic notices there of the paintings in the MS. A set of the cuts colourd is now issued, Oct. 1880, besides the plain set sent out in 1868-1871.*]

THE
Ellesmere MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



LONDON:
PUBLISHT FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY
BY N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

1868-1879.

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no. 2, 8
etc.

First Series.

CLAY AND TAYLOR, THE CHAUCER PRESS, BUNGAY.

DEDICATED

TO THE

Earl of Ellesmere,

BY WHOSE KIND LEAVE

THIS ELLESMERE MS IS PRINTED.

Christmas, 1868.



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¹ It has not the Friar lines 252 *b. c.* of the Hengwrt MS.

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¹ Lines 1455-6, 1493-8 of the Franklin's Tale are not found in any other MS. of the Canterbury Tales yet examined by or for me.

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¹ The four 'modern instances'—1. Peter (the Cruel) of Spain, 2. Peter of Cyprus, 3. Barnabo Visconti of Milan, and 4. Ugolino, Count of Pisa—are wrongly put at the end of the Tale, p. 500—503 *EL.*, instead of after Zenobia, l. 3564, p. 491 *EL.* ; p. 268 *S-T.*

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XV

CORRECTIONS FOR THE SIX-TEXT AND SEPARATE PRINTS
OF THE
ELLESMERE MS.

BY PROF. DR. EWALD FLÜGEL.

By the kindness of Lord Ellesmere and his Librarian, Mr. Strachan Holme, Prof. Flügel was able last May to collate with the MS. the whole of Dr. Furnivall's print of it for the Chaucer Society, and has sent the following list of Corrections, for which we are all greatly indebted to him.—F. J. F.

June 4, 1907.

- Here bygynneþ &c.] *no heading in the Ellesmere MS.*
- A.** 92, *for in read is*
360, *for such read swich*
408, *for fron read firo*
550, *for nas read was*
612, *for yet read and yet*
749, *for And read He*
(812 *wolde*)
859, *heading: Scithice . . . prelia*
865, *for That read What*
1252, *for Of read On*
1347, *for NOW read YOW*
1431, *his] omit.*
1454, *for soor read soor and*
1739, *for Therefore read Wherfore*
2058, *for to read til*
2488, *for But read And*
2493, *the] omit.*
2509, *for foyte read foote*
2920, *for And read Ne*
3862, *for in read is in*
4163, *for snorteth read fnorteth*
- B.** 644, *for or read for*
790, *for snoreth read fnorteth*
- D.** 157, *for whil that read whil*
253, *for if that read if*
- 660, *for awe read lawe*
1322, *for was read nas*
- E.** 569, *for And read But*
1582, *for And read As*
1804, *for tyne read tyme*
- F.** 234, *for prospectiues read per-
spectiues*
- C.** 86, *for wolde read wole*
1222, *for it read it is*
1683, *for the read this*
2041, *for sette read fette*
2444, *for han read ne han*
2912, *for or read or of*
4339, *tale] omit.*
- G.** 91, *for favour read sauour'*
772, *for Of read And of*
1122, *for In the read In*
1470, *for Man read Men*
- H.** 10, *for As read That*
240, *for they read that*
328, *for men read man*
- I.** 3, *for ne nas read nas*
170, *for noot read moot*
335, *bynymeth*
474, *for commendacioñ read com-
mendacioñ eek*
786, *for have read han*
923, *for no men read mo men*

GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

§ 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE.

ELLESMERE MS.

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury.

WHan that Aprille with hise shoures soote [leaf 5]
The droghte of March / hath perced to the roote
And bathed euery veyne / in swich licour
Of which vertu / engendred is the flour 4
Whan Zephirus eek / with his swete breeth
Inspired hath / in euery holt and heeth
The tendre croppes / and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram / his half[e] cours yronne ¶ i. sol in Ariete
And smale foweles / maken melodye
That slepen al the nyght / with open eye
So priketh hem nature in hir corages
Thanne longen folk / to goon on pilgrimages 12
And Palmeres / for to seken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes / kowthe in sondry londes
And specially / from euery shires ende
Of Engelond / to Caunturbury they wende 16
The hooly blisful martir for to seke
That hem hath holpen / whan þat they were seeke
Bifil that / in that seson on a day
In Southwerk / at the Tabard as I lay 20
Redy / to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury / with ful deuout corage
At nyght / were come / in to that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye 24
Of sondry folk / by aventure y-falle
In felawshipe / and pilgrimes were they alle
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde

2 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

The chambres and the stables weren wyde	28
And wel we weren esed atte beste	
And shortly / whan the sonne was to reste	
So hadde I spoken / <i>with</i> hem everychon	
That I was / of hir felaweshipe anon	32
And made forward / erly for to ryse	
To take oure wey / ther as I yow deuysel	
B ut natheles / whil I haue tyme <i>and</i> space	
Er that I ferther / in this tale pace	36
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoñ	
To telle yow / al the condiciõ	
Of ech of hem / so as it semed me	
And whiche they were / and of what degree	40
And eek' in what array / that they were Inne	
And at a knyght / than wol I first bigynne	
A knyght ther was / and that a worthy man	¶ Knyght
That fro the tyme / that he first bigan	44
To riden out / he loued chiuallrie	
Trouthe and honour / fredom and curteisie	
fful worthy was he / in his lordes werre	
And therto / hadde he riden / no man ferre	48
As wel in cristendom / as in Hethenesse	[leaf 5, back]
And euere / honoured for his worthynesse	
¶ At Alisaundre he was / whan it was wonne	
fful ofte tyme / he hadde the bord bigonne	52
Abouen alle nacions in Pruce	
In Lettow / hadde he reysed and in Ruce	
No cristen man so ofte of his degree	
In Gernade / at the seege eek hadde he be	56
Of Algezir / . and riden in Belmarye	
At Lyeys was he / and at Satalye	
Whan they were wonne / <i>and</i> in the grete See	
At many a noble Armees / hadde he be	60
At mortal batailles / hadde he been fiftene	
And foughten for oure feith at Tramysse	
In lystes thries / and ay slayn his foo	

This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also	64
Somtyme / with the lord of Palatye	
Agayn / another hethen in Turkye	
And euere moore / he hadde a souereyn prys	
And though þat he were worthy he was wys	68
And of his port / as meeke as is a mayde	
He neuere yet / no vileynye ne sayde	
In al his lyf / vn to no maner wight	
He was a verray parfit gentil knyght	72
¶ But for to tellen yow / of his array	
His hors weren goode / but he was nat gay	
Of ffustian / he wered a gypon	
Al bismotered with his habergeon	76
ffor he was late / ycome from his viage	
And wente / for to doon his pilgrymage	
With hym ther was his sone a yong ^r Squier	¶ Squier
A louyere / and a lusty Bachelor	80
With lokkes crulle / as they were leyd in presse	
Of twenty yeer of Age / he was I gesse	
Of his stature / he was of euene lengthe	
And wonderly delyuere / and of greet strengthe	84
And he hadde been somtyme in chyuachie	
In fflaundes / in Artoys and Pycardie	
And born hym weel / as of so litel space	
In hope / to stonden in his lady grace	88
Embrouded was he / as it were a meede	
Al ful of fresshe floures / whyte and reede	
Syngynge he was / or floytynge al the day	
He was as fressh / as <u>in</u> the Monthe of May	is 92
Short was his gowne / with sleues longe and wyde	
Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde	
He koude songes make / and wel endite	
Iuste and eek daunce / and weel purtreye and write	96
So hoothe he louede / that by nyghtertale	(leaf 6)
He slepte namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale	
Curteis he was / lowely / and seruysable	

4 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

And carf / biforn his fader at the table 100
A Yeman hadde he / and seruantz namo ¶ Yeman
 At that tyme / for hym liste ride soo
 And he was clad / in cote *and* hood of grene
 A sheef of pecok arwes / bright and kene 104
 Vnder his belt he bar ful thriftily
 Wel koude he / dresse his takel yemanly
 Hise arwes drouped nocht with fettheres lowe
 And in his hand / he baar a myghty bowe 108
 A not heed hadde he / with a broun visage
 Of woodecraft / wel koude he al the vsage
 Vp on his arm / he baar a gay bracer
 And by his syde / a swerd / and a bokeler / 112
 And on that oother syde / a gay daggere
 Harneised wel / and sharpe as point of spere
 A Cristophere on his brest of siluer sheene
 An horn he bar / the bawdryk was of grene 116
 A fforster was he / soothly as I gesse
Ther was also / a Nonne a PRIORESSE ¶ Prioeresse
 That of hir smylyng / was ful symple *and* coy
 Hire gretteste ooth / was but by seint Loy 120
 And she was cleped / madame Eglentyne
 fful weel she soong the seruice dyuyne,
 Entuned in hir nose / ful semeely
 And frenssh / she spak / ful faire and fetisly 124
 After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe
 ffor frenssh of Parys / was to hire vnknowe
 At mete / wel ytaught was she with alle
 She leet no morsel / from hir lippes falle 128
 Ne wette hir fyngres / in hir sauce depe
 Wel koude she carie a morsel / and wel kepe
 That no drope / ne fille vp on hire brist
 In curteisie was set ful muchel hir list / 132
 Hire ouer lippe / wyped she so clene
 That in hir coppe / ther was no ferthyng sene
 Of grece / whan she dronken hadde hir draughte

fful semely / after hir mete she raughte 136
 And sikerly / she was of greet desport'
 And ful plesaunt / and amyable of port'
 And peyned hire to countrefete cheere
 Of Court' and to been estatlich of manere 140
 And to ben holden digne of reuerence
 But for to speken of hire conscience
 She was so charitable and so pitous
 She wolde wepe / if that she saugh a Mous 144
 Kaught in a trappe / if it were deed or bledde [leaf 6, back]
 Of smale houndes / hadde she þat she fedde
 With rosted flessĥ / or Milk / and wastel breed
 But soore wepte she / if any of hem were deed 148
 Or if men smoot it / with a yerde smerte
 And al was conscience and tendre herte
 fful semyly / hir wympul pynched was
 Hire nose tretys / hir eyen greye as glas 152
 Hir mouth ful smal / and ther to softe *and* reed
 But sikerly / she hadde a fair forheed'
 It was almost' . a spanne brood I trowe
 ffor hardily / she was nat vndergrowe 156
 fful fetys was hir cloke / as I was war
 Of smal coral / aboute hire Arm she bar
 A peire of bedes / gauded al with grene
 And ther on / heng' a brooch of gold ful sheene 160
 On which / ther was first write a crowned .A.
 And after / Amor vincit omnia.
 Another Nonne / with hire hadde she ¶ Nonne & .iij.
 That was hire Chapeleyne and preestes thre preestes. 164
 A Monk ther was / a fair for the maistrie ¶ Monk/
 An outridere / that louede venerie
 A manly man / to been an Abbot able
 fful many a deyntee hors / hadde he in stable 168
 And whan he rood / men myghte his brydel heere
 Gynglen / in a whistlynge wynd als cleere
 And eek' as loude / as dooth þe Chapel belle

6 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

Ther as this lord / was kepere of the Celle 172
 The reule of seint Maure / or of seint Benoit /
 By cause that it was old / and som del streit /
 This ilke Monk / leet olde thynges pace
 And heeld / after the newe world the space 176
 He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen
 That seith / that hunters beth nat hooly men
 Ne that a Monk / whan he is recchelees
 Is likned / til a fissh / þat is waterlees 180
 This is to seyn / a Monk out of his Cloystre
 But thilke text / heeld he nat worth an Oystre
 And I seyde / his opinion was good
 What sholde he studie / and make hym seluen wood 184
 Vpon a book / in Cloystre alwey to poure
 Or swynken with his handes, and laboure
 As Austyn bit / how shal the world be serued
 Lat Austyn / haue his owene swynk / to him reserued 188
 Therefore / he was a prikasour aright
 Grehoundes he hadde / as swift as fowel in flight
 Of prkyng and of huntynge for the hare
 Was al his lust. for no cost wolde he spare 192
 I seigh his sleues / ypurfiled at the hond (leaf 7)
 With grys / and that the fyneste of a lond
 And for to festne his hood vnder his chyn
 He hadde of gold / ywroght / a ful curious pyn 196
 A loue knotte / in the gretter ende ther was
 His heed was balled / þat shoon as any glas
 And eek his face / as it hadde been enoynt/
 He was a lord ful fat / and in good poynt 200
 Hise eyen stepe / and rollynge in his heed
 That stemed / as a forneys of a leed
 His bootes souple / his hors in greet estaat
 Now certainly / he was a fair prelaat 204
 He was nat pale / as a forpynded goost
 A fat swan loued he best of any roost
 His palfrey / was as broun as is a berye

A	ffrere ther was / a wantowne <i>and</i> a merye,	¶ ffrere
	A lymytour / a ful solempne man	209
	In alle the ordres foure / is noon þat kan	
	So muchel of daliaunce / and fair langage	
	He hadde maad / ful many a mariage	212
	Of yonge wommen / at his owene cost	
	Vn to his ordre / he was a noble post	
	And wel biloued / and famulier was he	
	With frankeleyns / ouer al in his contree	216
	And [eek] with worthy wommen of the toun	
	ffor he hadde power of confessioun	
	As seyde hym self / moore than a Curat	
	ffor of his ordre / he was licenciati	220
	fful swetely / herde he confessiō	
	And plesaunt was his absolucioñ	
	He was an esy man / to yeue penaunce	
	Ther as he wiste / to haue a good pitaunce	224
	ffor vnto a poure ordre / for to yiue	
	Is signe / þat a man is wel yshryue	
	ffor if he yaf / he dorste make avaunt	
	He wiste / that a man was repentaunt	228
	ffor many a man / so harde is of his herte	
	He may nat wepe / al thogh hym soore smerte	
	Therefore in stede of wepyng and preyeres	
	Men moote yeue siluer / to the poure freres	232
	His typet was ay farsed ful of knyues	
	And pynnes / for to yeuen yonge wyues	
	And certainly / he hadde a murye note	
	Wel koude he synge / and pleyen on a rote	236
	Of yeddynges / he baar outrely the pris	
	His nekke / whit was / as the flour delys	
	Ther to / he strong was as a Champion	
	He knew the Tauernes wel in al the toun	240
	And euerich Hostiler / and Tappestere	[leaf 7, back]
	Bet than a lazar / or a beggestere	
	ffor vn to swich a worthy man as he	

8 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

Acorded nat / as by his facultee	244
To haue with sike lazars Aqueyntaunce	
It is nat honeste / it may nat avaunce	
ffor to deelen / with no swich poraille	
But al <i>with</i> riche / and selleres of vitaille	248
And ouer al / ther as profit sholde arise	
Curteis he was / and lowely of seruyse	
Ther nas no man / nowher so vertuous	
He was / the beste beggere in his hous	252
[.	
. <i>no gap in the MS.</i>]	
ffor thogh a wydwe / hadde noght a sho	
So plesaunt / was his In principio	
Yet wolde he haue / a ferthyng ^r er he wente	
His purchas / was wel better than his rente	256
And rage he koude / as it were right a whelpe	
In loue dayes / ther koude he muchel helpe	
ffor there he was nat lyk a Cloystrer	
With a thredbare cope / as is a poure scoler	260
But he was lyk / a maister / or a pope	
Of double worstede / was his semycope	
That rounded as a belle / out of the presse	
Somwhat he lipped / for his wantownesse	264
To make his englyssh / sweete vp on his tonge	
And in his harpyng ^r . whan þat he hadde songe	
Hise eyen twynkled in his heed aryght ^r	
As doon the sterres / in the frosty nyght ^r	268
This worthy lymytour / was cleped Huberd ^r	
A Marchant was ther <i>with</i> a forked berd ^r	¶ Marchant
In Motlee and hye on horse he sat ^r	
Vp on his heed a fflaundryssh Beuere hat /	272
His bootes clasped / faire and fetisly	
Hise rescns he spak / ful solempnely	
Sownynge alway thencrees of his wynnynge ^r	
He wolde the see were kept ^r for any thing ^r .	276
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle	

Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle	
This worthy man / ful wel his wit bisette	
Ther wiste no wight ^t þat he was in dette	280
So estatly / was he of his gouernaunce	
With his bargaynes / and <i>with</i> his cheuyssaunce	
ffor sothe / he was a worthy man with alle	
But sooth to seyn / I noot how men hym calle	284
A Clerk ther was / of Oxenford ^t also	¶ Clerk of Oxenford ^t ,
That vn to logyk ^t / hadde longe ygo	
And leene was his hors as is a rake	
And he nas nat right fat, I vndertake	288
But looked holwe / and ther to sobrelly	[leaf 8]
ful thredbare / was his ouereste courtepy	
ffor he hadde geten hym yet no benefice	
Ne was so worldly / for to haue office	292
ffor hym was leuere / haue at his beddes heed	
Twenty bookes / clad in blak ^t or reed	
Of Aristotle / and his Philosophie	
Than robes riche / or fithele / or gay sautrie	296
But al be / that he was a Philosophre	
Yet hadde he / but litel gold in cofre	
But al þat he myghte / of his freendes hente	
On bookes / and his lernynge he it spente	300
And bisily / gan for the soules preye	
Of hem / þat yaf hym wher <i>with</i> to scoleye	
Of studie took he moost cure <i>and</i> moost heede	
Noght o word / spak he moore than was neede	304
And that was seyð / in forme and reuerence	
And short ^t and quykt ^t and ful of hy sentence	
Sownynge in moral vertu / was his speche	
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche	308
A Sergeant of the Lawe / war and wys	¶ Sergeant of lawe
That often hadde been at the Parvys	
Ther was also / ful riche of excellence	
Discreet he was / and of greet reuerence	312
He semed swich / hise wordes weren so wise	

10 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

Iustice he was / ful often in Assise, By patente / and by pleyn commissioun ffor his science / and for his heigh renoun	316
Of fees and robes / hadde he many oon So greet a purchasour / was nowher noon Al was fee symple to hym in effect'	320
His purchasyng / myghte nat been infect' Nowher / so bisy a man as he ther nas And yet he semed / bisier than he was In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle	324
That from the tyme / of kyng william were yfalle Ther-to / he koude endite and make a thyng' Ther koude no wight' / pynchen at his writyng' And euery statut' / koude he pleyn by rote	328
He rood but hoomly / in a medlee cote Girt with a ceint of silk / with barres smale Of his array telle I no lenger tale.	332
A frankleyn / was in his compaignye Whit was his heed / as is a dayesye	frankleyn 332
Of his complexioñ / he was sangwyn Wel loued he by the morwe a sope in wyn To lyuen in delit' was euere his wone For he was / Epicurus owene sone	336
That heeld opinioñ that pleyn delit' Was verray felicitee parfit'	[leaf 8, back]
An housholdere / and that a greet was he Seint' Iulian was he in his contree	340
His breed / his Ale / was always after oon A bettre envyned man / was neuere noon With oute bake mete / was neuere his hous Of fisch and flessch / and that so plenteuous	344
It snewed in his hous / of mete and drynke Of alle deyntees / that men koude thynke After' the sondry sesons / of the year So chaunged he / his mete and his soper	348
fful many a fat partrich / hadde he in Muwe	

And many a Bream / and many a luce in Stuwe
 Wo was his Cook' / but if his sauce were
 Poynaunt / and sharpe / and redy al his geere 352
 His table dormant in his halle alway
 Stood redy couered / al the longe day
 At session's ther was he lord and sire
 fful ofte tyme / he was knyght of the shire 356
 An Anlaas / and a gipser al of silk'
 Heeng at his girdel / whit as morne Milk /
 A shirreue hadde he been and Countour
 Was nowher / such a worthy Vauasour *swich* 360
An haberdasshere and a Carpenter † Haberdasshere
 A Webbe / a Dyere / and a Tapycer † Carpenter
 And they were clothed alle in o lyueree † Webbe
† Dyere
† Tapicer
 Of a solempne / and a greet fraternitee 364
 fful fressh and newe / hir geere apiked was
 Hir knyues / were chaped noght with bras
 But al *with* siluer / wroght ful clene and weel
 Hire girdles and hir pouches euerydeel 368
 Wel semed ech of hem / a fair burgeys
 To sitten in a yeldehalle / on a deys
 Euerich / for the wisdom þat he kan
 Was shaply / for to been an Alderman 372
 ffor catel hadde they ynogh and rente
 And eek hir wyues wolde it' wel assente
 And elles certeyn / were they to blame
 It is ful fair / to been yelepud ma Dame 376
 And goon to vigilies / al bifore
 And haue a Mantel roialliche ybore
A Cook they hadde *with* hem for the nones † Cook.
 To boille the chiknes *with* the Marybones 380
 And poudre Marchant' tart' and galyngale
 Wel koude he knowe / a draughte of Londoñ ale
 He koude rooste and sethe / and boille and frye
 Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye 384
 But greet harm was it / as it thoughte me [leaf 9]

12 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

That on his shyne / a mormal hadde he ffor blankmanger / that made he with the beste	
A Shipman was ther / wonynge fer by weste ffor aught I woot / he was of Dertemouthe	‡ Shipman 389
He rood vp on a Rouncey / as he kouthe In a gowne of faldyng' to the knee	
A daggere / hangynge on a laas hadde he Aboute his nekke / vnder his Arm adoun	392
The hoot somer / hadde maad his hewe al broun And certainly / he was a good felawe	
fful many a draughte of wyn / had he [y-]drawe ffro Burdeuxward' / whil that the Chapman sleepe	396
Of nyce conscience / took he no keepe If þat he faught' and hadde the hyer hond'	
By water / he sente hem hoom to euery lond' But of his craft / to rekene wel his tydes	400
His stremes / and his daungers hym bisides His herberwe / and his moone / his lodemenage	
Ther nas noon swich / from Hulle to Cartage Hardy he was and wys / to vndertake	404
With many a tempest / hadde his berd been shake He knew alle the hauenes / as they were	
ffrom Gootlonð to the Cape of ffynystere And euery cryke / in Britaigne and in Spayne	408
His Barge / ycleped was the Maudelayne W ith vs ther was a Doctour of Phisik	‡ Doctour of Phisik/
In al this world / ne was ther noon hym lik To speke of phisik / and of Surgerye	412
ffor he was grounded in Astronome He kepte his pacient' a ful greet deel	
In houres / by his magyk natureel Wel koude he fortunen the Ascendent	416
Of hise ymages / for his pacient' He knew the cause / of euerich maladye	
Were it of hoot' or cold / or moyste / or drye And where they engendred / and of what humour	420

He was a verray parfit praktisour
 The cause yknowe / and of his harm the roote
 Anon he yaf / the sike man his boote 424
 fful redy hadde he / hise Apothecaries
 To sende him drogges and his letuaries
 ffor ech of hem / made oother for to wynne
 Hir frendshipe / nas nat newe to bigynne 428
 Wel knew he / the olde Esculapius
 And Deyscorides / and eek Risus
 Olde ypocras / Haly / and Galyen
 Serapion Razis / and Auycen 432
 Auerrois / Damascien / and Constantyn [leaf 9, back]
 Bernard / and Gatesden / and Gilbertyn
 Of his diete / mesurable was he
 ffor it was / of no superfluitee 436
 But of greet norissyng / and digestible
 His studie / was but litel on the Bible
 In sangwyn and in pers / he clad was al
 Lyned with Taffata / and with Sendal 440
 And yet he was / but esy of dispence
 He kepte / that he wan in pestilence
 ffor gold in Phisik / is a cordial
 Therefore he louede gold in speial 444
 A good wif was ther of biside Bathe ¶ The goode Wif of
 ¶ Bathe
 But she was som del deaf *and* þat was scathe
 Of clooth makynge she hadde swich an haunte
 She passed hem of ypres and of Gaunte 448
 In al the parisshe / wif ne was ther noon
 That to the offrynge / bifore hire sholde goon
 And if ther dide / certeyn so wrooth was she
 That she was / out of alle charitee 452
 Hir couerchiefs / ful fyne weren of grounde
 I dorste swere / they weyeden ten pounde
 That on a sonday / weren vpon hir heede
 Hir hosen weren / of fyn scarlet reede 456
 fful streite yteyd / and shoes ful moyste *and* newe

14 GROUP A. § 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE. Ellesmere MS.

- Boold was hir face / and fair and reed of hewe
 She was a worthy womman al hir lyue
 Housbondes at chirche dore / she hadde fyue 460
 Withouten oother compaignye in youthe
 But ther of / nedeth nat to speke as nowthe
 And thries / hadde she been at Ierusalem
 She hadde passed / many a straunge strem 464
 At Rome she hadde been and at Boloigne
 In Galice at Seint Iame / and at Coloigne
 She koude muchel / of wandrynge by the weye
 Gat tothed was she / soothly for to seye 468
 Vp on an Amblere / esily she sat
 Ywympled wel / and on hir heed an hat
 As brood / as is a bokeler / or a targe
 A foot mantel / aboute hir hipes large 472
 And on hire feet a paire of spores sharpe
 In felaweshipe / wel koude she laughe *and* carpe
 Of remedies of loue / she knew *per* chaunce
 For she koude of that Art the olde daunce 476
- A** good man was ther of Religioun
 And was / a poure Person of a toun ¶ Person of a toun.
 But riche he was / of hooly thoght *and* werk/
 He was also / a lerned man a clerk 480
 That cristes gospel / trewely wolde preche [leaf 10]
 Hise parissheis / deuoutly wolde he teche
 Benygne he was / and wonder diligent
 And in Aduersitee ful pacient 484
 And swich / he was [y-]preued ofte sithes
 fful looth were hym / to cursen for hise tithes
 But rather wolde he yeuen out of doute
 Vn to his poure parissheis aboute 488
 Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce
 He koude / in litel thyng haue suffisaunce
 Wyd was his parisshe / and houses fer a sonder
 But he ne lafte nat for reyn ne thonder 492
 In siknesse nor in meschief / to visite

The ferreste in his parisshe muche and lite
 Vp on his feet and in his hand a staf
 This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf 496
 That firste he wroghte / and afterward that he taughte
 Out of the gospel / he tho wordes caughte
 And this figure / he added eck ther to
 That if gold ruste / what shal Iren doo 500
 For if a preest be foul / on whom we truste
 No wonder is / a lewed man to ruste
 And shame it is / if [that] a prest take keepe
 A shiten shepherde / and a clene sheepe 504
 Wel oghte a preest / ensample for to yeue
 By his clenness / how þat his sheepe sholde lyue
 He sette nat his benefice to hyre
 And leet his sheepe / encombred in the Myre 508
 And ran to London / vn to seint Poules
 To seken hym a chauntrie for soules
 Or with a bretherhed / to been withholde
 But dwelleth at hoom and kepeth wel his folde 512
 So that the wolf / ne made it nat myscarie
 He was a shepherde / and nocht a Mercenarie
 And though he hooly were / and vertuous
 He was nat to synful man despitous 516
 Ne of his speche / daungerous ne digne
 But in his techyng^t discret and benygne
 To drawen folk to heuene by fairnesse
 By good ensample / this was his bisynesse 520
 But it were any persone obstinat^t
 What so he were / of heigh or lough estat
 Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys
 A bettre preest I trowe / þat nowher noon ys 524
 He waiteth / after no pompe and reuerence
 Ne maketh him a spiced conscience
 But cristes loore / and hise Apostles twelue
 He taughte / but first he folwed it hym selue 528

With hym ther was a Plowman was his brother ^[leaf 10, back]
 ¶ Plowman.

That hadde ylad of dong' ful many a fother
 A trewe swynkere / and a good was he
 Lyuyng in pees / and parfit charitee 532
 God loued he best / with al his hoole herte
 At alle tymes / thogh he gamed or smerte
 And thanne his neighebores / right as hym selue
 He wolde thresshe / and ther to dyke and delue 536
 For cristes sake / for euery poure wight
 Withouten hire / if it lay in his myght
 Hise tithes / payde he ful faire and wel
 Bothe of his propre swynk' and his catel 540
 In a Tabard he rood / vpon a Mere
Ther was also / a Reue and a Millere ¶ Millere.
 A Somnour / and a Pardoner also
 A Maunciple / and my self ther were namo 544
 ¶ The Millere was a stout carl for the nones
 Ful byg he was / of brawn / and eek of bones
 That proued wel / for ouer al ther he cam
 At wrastlyng / he wolde haue alwey the Ram 548
 He was short sholdred / brood / a thikke knarre
 Ther was no dore / þat he ne wolde heue of harre
 Or breke it / at a rennyng' with his heed
 His berd / as any sowe / or fox was reed 552
 And ther to brood / as though it were a spade
 Vp on the cope / right of his nose he hade
 A werte / and ther on stood a toft of herys.
 Reed / as the brustles / of a sowes erys 556
 Hise nosethirles / blake were and wyde
 A swerd and a bokeler / bar he by his syde
 His mouth as greet was / as a greet forneys
 He was a Iangler and a goliardeys 560
 And that was moost' / of synne and harlotries
 Wel koude he stelen corn / and tollen thries
 And yet he hadde / a thombe of gold pardee
 A whit cote / and a blew hood wered he 564
 A baggepipe / wel koude he blowe and sowne

And ther with al / he broghte vs out of towne
A gentil Maunciple / was ther of a temple ¶ Maunciple.
 Of which Achatours / myghte take exemple 568
 ffor to be wise / in byynge of vitaille
 ffor wheither that he payde / or took by taille
 Algate / he wayted so / in his Achaat'
 That he was ay biforn / and in good staat' 572
 Now is nat that of god a ful fair grace
 That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
 The wisdom / of an heepe of lerned men
 Of maistres hadde he / mo than thries ten 576
 That weren of lawe / expert' and curious [leaf 11]
 Of whiche / þer weren a duszeyne in that hous
 Worthy to been stywardes / of rente and lond'
 Of any lord / that is in Engelond' 580
 To maken hym lyue / by his propre good
 In honour dettelees / but if he were wood
 Or lyue as scarsly / as hym list' desire
 And able / for to helpen al a shire 584
 In any caas / þat myghte falle or happe
 And yet this manciple / sette hir aller cappe
The Reue was / a sclendre colerik man ¶ Reue.
 His berd was shaue / as ny as euer he kan 588
 His heer was by his crys / ful round yshorn
 His tope was doked / lyk a preest biforn
 fful longe were his legges / and ful lene
 ylyk a staf / ther was no calf ysene 592
 Wel koude he kepe a gerner / and a bynne
 Ther was noon Auditour / koude of him wynne
 Wel wiste he / by the droghte / and by the reyn
 The yeldynge / of his seed / and of his greyn 596
 His lordes sheepe / his neet' his dayerye
 His swyn / his hors / his stoor / and his pultrye
 Was hoolly / in this Reues gouernyng /
 And by his couenant' yaf the rekenyng'
 Syn that his lord / was twenty yeer of age 600

Ther koude no man / brynge hym in Arrerage
 Ther nas baillif ne hierde / nor oother hyne
 That he [ne] knew his sleighte and his couyne 604
 They were adrad of hym / as of the deeth
 His wonyng^r was ful faire vp on an heeth
 With grene trees / shadwed was his place
 He koude better than his lord purchace 608
 fful riche he was astored pryuely
 His lord / wel koude he plesen subtilly
 To yeue and lene hym / of his owene good
 And haue a thank ^{and} / yet a gowne and hood 612
 In youthe he hadde lerned a good myster
 He was a wel good wrighte a Carpenter
 This Reue sat^r vp on a ful good stot^r
 That was al pomely grey / and highte Scot^r 616
 A long surcote of pers / vp on he hade
 And by his syde / he baar a rusty blade
 Of Northfolk^r was this Reue / of which I telle
 Beside a toun / men clepen Baldeswelle 620
 Tukked he was / as is a frere aboute
 And euere he rood / the hyndreste of oure route
 A Somonour was ther *with* vs in that place ¶ Somonour.
 That hadde / a fyr reed Cherubynnes face 624
 ffor sawcefleem he was with eyen narwe [leaf 11, back]
 As hoot he was / and lecherous as a sparwe
 With scaled browes blake and piled berd^r
 Of his visage / children were aferd^r 628
 Ther nas quyk^r siluer / lytarge ne brymstoon
 Boras / Ceruce / ne oille of Tartre noon
 Ne oynement^r that wolde clense and byte
 That hym myghte helpen / of the whelkes white 632
 Nor of the knobbes / sittynge on his chekes
 Wel loued he garleek / oynons / and eek lekes
 And for to drynken strong wyn / reed as blood
 Thanne wolde he speke / and crie as he were wood 636
 And whan þat he / wel dronken hadde the wyn

Than wolde he speke no word but latyn
 A fewe termes hadde he / two or thre
 That he had lerned / out of som decree 640
 No wonder is / he herde it al the day
 And eek ye knowen wel / how þat a Iay
 Kan clepen watte / as wel as kan the pope
 But who so koude in oother thyng^t hym grope 644
 Thanne hadde he spent^t al his Philosophie
 Ay questio quid iuris / wolde he crie
 He was / a gentil harlot^t and a kynde
 A bettre felawe / sholde men nocht fynde 648
 He wolde suffre / for a quart of wyn
 A good felawe / to haue his concubyn
 A twelf monthe / and excuse hym atte fulle
 And priuely / a fynch eek koude he pulle 652
 And if he foond owher / a good felawe
 He wolde techen him / to have noon Awe
 In swich caas / of the Ercedekenes curs
 But^t if a mannes soule / were in his purs 656
 ffor in his purs / he sholde ypunysshed be
 Purs / is the Ercedekenes helle seyde he
 But wel I woot / he lyed right in dede
 Of cursyng^t oghte ech gilty man [to] drede 660
 ffor curs wol slee / right as assoillyng^t sauith
 And also / war him of a Significauit/
 In daunger hadde he / at his owene gise
 The yonge girles / of the diocise 664
 And knew hir conseil / and was al hir reed
 A gerland^t / hadde he set vp on his heed
 As greet / as it were for an Ale stake
 A bokeleer / hadde he maad him of a Cake 668
With hym ther was / a gentil Pardoner † Pardoner.
 Of Rounciuale / his freend and his compeer
 That streight was comen / fro the court of Rome.
 fful loude he soong^t com hider loue to me 672
 This Somonour / bar to hym a stif burdoun (leaf 12)

Was neuere trompe / of half so greet a soun
 This Pardoner hadde heer / as yelow as wex
 But smothe it heeng' as dooth a strike of flex 676
 By ounces / henge hise lokkes þat he hadde
 And ther with / he hise shuldres ouerspradde
 But thynne it lay / by colpons oon and oon
 But hood for Iolitee / wered he noon 680
 For it was trussed / vp in his walet'
 Hym thoughte / he rood / al of the newe Iet'
 Discheuelee saue his cappe / he rood al bare
 Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare 684
 A vernycle hadde he sowed / vp on his cappe
 His walet' [lay] biforn hym / in his lappe
 Bret ful of pardoñ / comen from Rome al hoot/
 A voys he hadde / as smal as hath a goot/ 688
 No berd hadde he / ne neuere sholde haue
 As smothe it was / as it were late shaue
 I trowe / he were a geldyng or a mare
 But of his craft' fro Berwyk' in to Ware 692
 Ne was ther / swich another Pardoner
 ffor in his male / he hadde a pilwe beer
 Which þat he seyde / was oure lady veyl
 He seyde he hadde / a gobet' of the seyl 696
 That seint Peter hadde / whan þat he wente
 Vp on the see / til Ihesu crist hym hente
 He hadde a croys of latoñ / ful of stones
 And in a glas / he hadde pigges bones 700
 But *with* thise relikes / whan þat he fond'
 A poure person) / dwellynge vp on lond'
 Vp on a day / he gat hym moore moneye
 Than þat the person gat / in Monthes tweye 704
 And thus / with feyned flaterye and Iapes
 He made the person) and the peple his Apes
 But trewely / to tellen atte laste
 He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste 708
 Wel koude he rede / a lessoñ or a storic

But alderbest / he song an Offertorie
 ffor wel he wiste / whan þat song was songe
 He moste preche / and wel affile his tonge 712
 To wynne siluer / as he ful wel koude
 Therefore he song / the murierly and loude
NOW haue I toold you shortly in a clause
 The staat^t tharray / the nombre *and* eek the cause 716
 Why þat assembled was this compaignye
 In Southwerk / at* this gentil hostelrye [* MS. as]
 That highte the Tabard / faste by the belle
 But now is tyme / to yow for to telle 720
 How that we baren vs that ilke nyght [leaf 12, back]
 Whan we were / in that hostelrie alyght
 And after wol I telle / of our viage
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage 724
 But first I pray yow / of youre curteisye
 That ye narette it nat my vileynye
 Thogh þat I pleyedly speke in this mateere
 To telle yow / hir wordes and hir cheere 728
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely
 ffor this ye knowen / al so wel as I
 Who so shal telle a tale / after a man
 He moote reherce / as ny as euere he kan 732
 Euerich a word / if it be in his charge
 Al speke he / neuer so rudeliche or large
 Or ellis / he moot telle his tale vntrewe
 Or feyne thyng^t. or fynde wordes newe 736
 He may nat spare / al thogh he were his brother
 He moot as wel / seye o word as another
 Crist^t spak hym self / ful brode in hooly writ^t
 And wel ye woot^t no vileynye is it 740
 Eek Plato seith / who so kan hym rede
 The wordes / moote be cosyn to the dede
 Also I prey yow / to foryeue it me
 Al haue I nat set folk in hir degree 744
 Heere in this tale / as þat they sholde stonde

My wit is short^t ye may wel vnderstonde
 ¶ Greet chiere made oure hoost vs euerichon
 And to the soper / sette he vs anon 748
 He And serued vs / with vitaille at the beste
 Strong was the wyn / and wel to drynke vs leste
 A semely man / oure hoost was with alle
 ffor to been / a Marchal in an halle 752
 A large man he was / with eyen stepe
 A fairer Burgeys / was ther noon in Chepe
 Boold of his speche / and wys and well ytaught^t
 And of manhod / hym lakked[e] right naught^t 756
 Eek therto / he was right a myrie man
 And after soper / pleyen he bigan
 And spak of myrthe / amonges othere thynges
 Whan that we / hadde maad our rekenynges 760
 And seyde thus / now lordynges trewely
 Ye been to me / right welcome hertely
 ffor by my trouthe / if that I shal nat lye
 I saugh nat this yeer / so myrie a compaignye 764
 Atones in this herberwe as is now
 ffayn wolde I doon yow myrthe / wiste I how
 And of a myrthe / I am right now bythoght^t
 To doon yow ese / and it shal coste noght^t 768
 ¶ Ye goon to Caunterbury / god yow speede [leaf 13]
 The blisful martir / quite yow youre neede
 And wel I woot / as ye goon by the weye
 Ye shapen yow / to talen and to pleye 772
 ffor trewely / confort^t ne myrthe is noon
 To ride by the weye doumb as the stoon
 And therefore / wol I maken yow disport^t
 As I seyde erst^t and doon yow som confort^t 776
 And if yow liketh alle / by oon assent^t
 ffor to stonden / at my Iugement^t
 And for to werken / as I shal yow seye
 To morwe / whan ye riden by the weye 780
 Now by my fader soule that is deed^t

But if ye be myrie / I wol yeue yow myn heed^d
 ¶ Hoold vp youre hond^d withoute moore speche
 Oure conseil / was nat longe for to seche 784
 Vs thoughte / it was noght worth / to make it wys
 And graunted hym / wit outen moore auys
 And bad him seye his vcirdit^d as hym leste
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / now herkneth for the beste 788
 But taak it nought / I prey yow in desdeyn
 This is the poynt^d to speken short and pleyn
 That ech of yow / to shorte with oure weye
 In this viage / shal telle tales tweye 792
 To Caunterburyward / I mene it so
 And homward / he shal tellen othere two
 Of auentures / that whilom han bifalle
 And which of yow / that bereth hym best of alle 796
 That is to seyn / that telleth in this caas
 Tales of best sentence / and moost solaas
 Shal haue a soper / at oure aller cost^d
 Heere in this place / sittynge by this post^d 800
 Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury
 And for to make yow / the moore mury
 I wol my self / goodly with yow ryde
 Right at myn owene cost^d and be youre gyde 804
 And who so wole / my Iuggement withseye
 Shal paye / al that we spenden by the weye
 And if ye vouche sauf / that it be so
 Tel me anon / with outen wordes mo 808
 And I wol erly / shape me therefore
 ¶ This thyng was graunted and oure othes swore
 With ful glad herte / and preyden hym also
 That he ~~would~~ vouche sauf / for to do so 812
 And that he / wolde been oure gouernour
 And of our tales / Iuge and Reportour
 And sette a soper / at a certeyn pris
 And we / wol reuled been at his deuys 816
 ¶ In heigh and lough / and thus by oon assent^d [leaf 13, back]

wolde

We been acorded / to his Iuggement'	
And ther vp on / the wyn was fet anon	
We dronken / and to reste wente echon	820
With outen / any lenger tarynge	
Amorwe / whan þat day / gan for to sprynge	
Vp roos oure hoost' and was oure aller cok'	
And gadrede vs togidre / alle in a flok'	824
And forth we riden / a litel moore than paas	
Vn to the wateryng' of Seint Thomas	
And there oure hoost' bigan his hors areste	
And seyde lordynges / herkneth if yow leste	828
¶ Ye woot youre foreward / and [I] it yow recorde	
If euen song / and morwe song accorde	
Lat se now / who shal telle the firste tale	
As euere mote I drynke / wyn or ale	832
Who so be / rebel to my Iuggement'	
Shal paye / for al þat by the wey is spent'	
Now draweth cut' er þat we ferrer twynne	
He / which þat hath the shorteste shal bigynne	836
Sire knyght quod he / my mayster and my lord'	
Now draweth cut / for that is myn accord'	
Cometh neer quod he / my lady Prioresse	
And ye sire clerk / lat be your shamefastnesse	840
Ne studieth noght / ley hond to euery man	
Anon to drawen / euery wight bigan	
And shortly / for to tellen as it was	
Were it by auenture / or sort' or cas	844
The sothe is this / the cut fil to the knyght'	
Of which / ful blithe and glad was every wyght	
And telle he moste his tale / as was resoñ	
By foreward / and by composicioñ	848
As ye han herd / what nedeth wordes mo	
An whan this goode man / saugh þat it was so	
As he / that wys was and obedient'	
To kepe his foreward / by his free assent'	852
He seyde / syn I shal bigynne the game	

What welcome be the cut / a goddes name
Now lat us ryde / and herkneth what I seye
And *wit* that word / we ryden forth oure weye 856
And he bigan / with right a myrie cheere
His tale anon / and seyde in this manere

I amque domos patrias Sithice post aspera [leaf 14]
gentis presia laurigero &c.

¶ Heere bigynneth the knyghtes tale

Whilom / as olde stories / tellen vs [Painting of the Knight in the margin.]
 Ther was a duc^e þat highte Theseus
 Of Atthenes / he was lord and gouernour 861
 And in his tyme swich a Conquerour,
 That gretter / was ther noon vnder the Sonne
 fful many a riche contree hadde he wonne 864
 That with his wysdom / and his chialrie
 He conquered / al the regne of ffemenye
 That whilom / was ycleped Scithia
 And wedded[e] the queene ypolita 868
 And broghte hire hoom w^{ith} hym in his contree
 With muchel glorie / and greet solempnytee
 And eek^e hir faire suster Emelye
 And thus / with victorie and with melodye 872
 Lete I this noble duc / to Atthenes ryde
 And al his hoost^e in Armes hym bisyde
 ¶ And certes / if it nere / to long to heere
 I wolde yow haue toold / fully the manere 876
 How wonnen was the regne of ffemenye
 By Theseus / and by his chialrye
 And of the grete bataille for the nones
 Bitwixen Atthenes and Amazones 880
 And how asseged was ypolita
 The faire hardy queene of Scithia
 And of the feste / þat was at hir weddyng
 And of the tempest / at hir hoom comyng 884
 But al that thyng^e I moot as now forbere
 I haue god woot / a large feeld to ere
 And wayke been / the Oxen in my Plough
 The remenant of the tale / is long ynough 888
 I wol nat letten eek^e noon of this route

Lat euery felawe / telle his tale aboute
 And lat se now / who shal the soper wynne
 And ther I lefté / I wol ayeyn bigynne 892
This duc / of whom I make mencion ¶ Narratio
 Whan he was come / almoost vn to the toun
 In al his wele / and in his mooste pride
 He was war / as he caste his eye aside 896
 Where that ther kneled in the weye
 A compaignye of ladyes / tweye and tweye
 Ech after oother / clad in clothes blake [leaf 14, back]
 But swich a cry / and swich a wo they make 900
 That in this world / nys creature lyuyng
 That herde / swich another waymentyng
 And of this cry / they nolde neuere stenten
 Til they / the reynes of his brydel henten 904
 ¶ What folk been ye / that at myn hom comyng
 Perturben so my feste / with cryng
 Quod Theseus / haue ye so greet enuye
 Of myn honour / þat thus compleyne and crye 908
 Or who hath yow / mysboden or offended
 And telleth me / if it may been amended
 And why / þat ye been / clothed thus in blak
 ¶ The eldeste lady of hem alle spak 912
 Whan she hadde swowned / with a deedly cheere
 That it was routhe / for to seen and heere
 And seyde lord / to whom ffortune hath yeuen
 Victorie / and as a Conqueror to lyuen 916
 Nat greueth vs / youre glorie and youre honour
 But we / biseken mercy and socour
 Haue mercy on oure wo / and oure distresse
 Som drope of pitee / thurgh thy gentillesse 920
 Vp on vs wrecched wommen / lat thou falle
 ffor certes lord / ther is noon of vs alle
 That she ne hath been / a duchesse / or a queene
 Now be we caytyues / as it is wel seene 924
 Thanked be ffortune / and hire false wheel

That noon estat^t assureth to be weel
 And *certes* lord / to abyden youre *presence*
 Heere in the temple / of the goddesse clemence 928
 We han ben waitynge / al this fourtenygh^t
 Now help vs lord / sith it is in thy mygh^t
 ¶ I wrecche / which þat wepe and crie thus
 Was whilom wyf / to kyng Cappaneus 932
 That starf at Thebes / cursed be that day
 And alle we that been in this array
 And maken / al this lamentacioun
 We losten / alleoure housbondes at that toun 936
 Whil that the seege / ther aboute lay
 And yet now the olde Creon weylaway
 That lord is now / of Thebes the Citee
 ffulfild of Ire / and of Iniquitee 940
 He for despit^t and for his tyrannye
 To do the dede bodyes vileynye
 Of alleoure lordes / whiche that been slawe
 He hath alle the bodyes / on an heepe ydrawe 944
 And wol nat suffren hem / by noon assent^t
 Neither to been yburyed nor ybrent^t
 But maketh houndes / ete hem in despit^t [leaf 15]
 And with that word / *with* outen moore respit^t 948
 They fillen gruf / and criden pitously
 Haue on vs wrecched women som mercy
 And latoure sorwe / synken in thyn herte
 ¶ This gentil duc^e down from his courser sterte 952
 With herte pitous / whan he herde hem speke
 Hym thoughte / þat his herte wolde breke
 Whan he saugh hem / so pitous and so maat^t
 That whilom weren / of so greet estaat^t 956
 And in his Armes / he hem alle vp hente
 And hem conforteth / in ful good entente
 And swoor his ooth / as he was trewe knygh^t
 He wolde doon / so ferforthly his mygh^t 960
 Vp on the tiraunt Creon / hem to wreke

That all the peple of Grece / sholde speke
 How Creon / was of Theseus yserued
 As he þat hadde / his deeth ful wel deserued 964
 And right anon / *with* outen moore abood
 His Baner he desplayeth and forth rood
 To Thebesward and al his hoost beside
 No neer Atthenes / wolde he go ne ride 968
 Ne take his ese / fully half a day
 But onward on his wey / that nyght he lay
 And sente anon / ypolita the queene
 And Emelye / hir yonge suster sheene 972
 Vn to the toun of Atthenes to dwelle
 And forth he rit ther is namoore to telle
The rede statue of Mars / *with* spere and targe
 So shyneth / in his white baner large 976
 That alle the feeldes / glyteren vp and down
 And by his Baner / born is his penoun
 Of gold ful riche / in which ther was ybete
 The Mynotaur / which þat he slough in Crete 980
 ¶ Thus rit this duc thus rit this Conquerour
 And in his hoost of Chialrie the flour
 Til þat he cam to Thebes and alighte
 ffaire in a feeld / ther as he thoughte fighte 984
 But shortly / for to speken of this thynge
 With Creon / which þat was of Thebes kyng
 He faught / and slough hym manly as a knyght
 In pleybataille / and putte the folk to flyght 988
 And by assaut he wan the Citee after
 And rente adoun / bothe walf and sparre and rafter
 And to the ladyes / he restored agayn
 The bones / of hir housbondes that weren slayn 992
 To doon obsequies / as was tho the gyse
 But it were al to longe / for to deuyse
 The grete clamour / and the waymentynge [leaf 15, back]
 That the ladyes made / at the brennyng 996
 Of the bodies / and the grete honour

That Theseus / the noble Conquerour
 Dooth to the ladyes / whan they from hym wente
 But shortly for to telle / is myn entente 1000
 ¶ Whan þat this worthy duc' this Theseus
 Hath Creon slayn / and wonne Thebes thus
 Stille in that feeld / he took al nyght his reste
 And dide with al the contree / as hym leste 1004
 ¶ To ransake in the taas / of the bodyes dede
 Hem for to strepe / of harneys and of wede
 The pilours / diden bisynesse and cure
 After the bataille and disconfiture 1008
 And so bifel / þat in the taas they founde
 Thurgħ girt' with many a greuou bloody wounde
 Two yonge knyghtes / liggyng by and by
 Bothe in oon Armes / wroght ful richely 1012
 Of whiche two / Arcita highte that oon
 And that oother knyght / highte Palamon
 Nat fully quyke / ne fully dede they were
 But by here Cote Armures / and by hir gere 1016
 The heraudes / knewe hem best in special
 As they þat weren / of the blood roial
 Of Thebes / and of sustren two yborn
 Out of the taas / the pilours han hem torn 1020
 And han hem caried / softe vn to the tente
 Of Theseus / and ful soone he hem sente
 To Atthenes / to dwellen in prison
 Perpetuelly / he nolde no raunson 1024
 And whan this worthy duc' hath thus ydon
 He took his hoost' and hoom he rood anon
 With laurer crowned / as a Conquerour
 And ther he lyueth / in ioye and in honour 1028
 Terme of [his] lyue / what nedeth wordes mo
 And in a tour / in angwissħ and in wo
 This Palamon / and his felawe Arcite
 ffor eueremoore / ther may no gold hem quite 1032
 ¶ This passeth / yeer by yeer / and day by day

Till it fil ones / in a morwe of May
 That Emelye / þat fairer was to sene
 Than is the lylie / vpon his stalke grene 1036
 And fressher than the May / with floures newe
 ffor with the Rose colour stroof hire hewe
 I noot which was the fyner of hem two
 Er it were day / as was hir wone to do 1040
 She was arisen / and al redy dight
 ffor May wole haue / no slogardrie a nyght
 The seson / priketh / euery gentil herte [leaf 16]
 And maketh hym / out of his slepe to sterte 1044
 And seith arys / and do thyn obseruañce
 This maked Emelye / haue remembrañce
 To doon honour to May / and for to ryse
 Yclothed was she / fressh for to deuyse 1048
 Hir yelow heer / was broyded in a tresse
 Bihynde hir bak / a yerde long I gesse
 And in the gardyn / at the sonne vp riste
 She walketh vp and down / and as hire liste 1052
 She gadereth floures party / white and rede
 To make a subtil gerland for hire hede
 And as an Aungel / heuenysshly she soong
 The grete tour / þat was so thikke and stroong 1056
 Which of the Castel / was the chief dongeon
 Ther as the knyghtes / weren in prisoñ
 Of whiche I tolde yow / and tellen shal
 Was euene ioynant to the gardyn wal 1060
 Ther as this Emelye / hadde hir pleyynge
 Bright was the sonne / and cleer that morwenyng
 And this Palamoñ / this woful prisoner
 As was his wone / bi leue of his gayler 1064
 Was risen / and romed / in a chambre an heigh
 In which / he al the noble Citee seigh
 And eek the gardyn / ful of braunches grene
 Ther as this fresshe Emelye the sheene 1068
 Was in hire walk and romed vp and down

This sorweful prisoner / this Palamoun
 Goth in the chambre / romynge to and fro
 And to hym self / compleynynge of his wo 1072
 That he was born / ful ofte he seyde allas
 And so bifel / by auenture or cas
 That thurgh a wyndow / thikke of many a barre
 Of Iren / greet and square as any sparre 1076
 He cast his eye / vpon Emelya
 And ther with al he bleynte and cride .A.
 As though he stongen were vn to the herte
 And with that cry / Arcite anon vp sterte 1080
 And seyde cosyn myn / what eyleth thee
 That art so pale / and deedly on to see
 Why cridestow / who hath thee doon offence
 ffor goddes love / taak al in pacience 1084
 Oure prisoñ / for it may noon oother be
 Fortune / hath yeuen vs this Aduersitee
 Som wikke aspect / or disposicioñ
 Of Saturne / by sum constellacioñ 1088
 Hath yeuen vs this / al though we hadde it sworn
 So stood the heuene / whan þat we were born
 We moste endure / this is the short and playn leaf 16, back
 ¶ This Palamon answerde / and seyde agayn 1092
 Cosyn for sothe / of this opinioñ
 Thow hast a veyn ymaginacioñ
 This prison caused me nat for to crye
 But I was hurt' right now thurgh out myn eye 1096
 In to myn herte / that wol my bane be
 The fairnesse / of that lady þat I see
 Yond in the gardyn / romen to and fro
 Is cause / of al my cryng' and my wo 1100
 I noot' wher she be / womman or goddesse
 But Venus is it / soothly as I gesse
 And ther with al / on knees down he fil
 And seyde Venus / if it be thy wil 1104
 Yow in this gardyn / thus to transfigure

Bifore me / sorweful wrecche creature
 Out of this prisoñ / helpe þat we may scapen
 And if so be / my destynee be shapen 1108
 By eterne word / to dyen in prisoñ
 Of oure lynage / haue som compassioñ
 That is so lowe ybrogħt' by tirannye
 And with that word / Arcite gan espye 1112
 Wher as this lady / romed to and fro
 And *with* that sigħte / hir beautee hurte hym so
 That if that Palamon / [was] wounded sore
 Arcite is hurt' as moche as he / or moore 1116
 And *with* a sigh / he seyde pitously
 The fresshe beautee / sleeth me sodeynly
 Of hire / that rometh / in the yonder place
 And but I haue / hir mercy and hir grace 1120
 That I may seen hire / atte leeste weye
 I nam but deed / ther is namoore to seye
 ¶ This Palamon / whan he tho wordes herde
 Dispitously / he looked and answerde 1124
 Wheither seistow this / in earnest' or in pley ?
 ¶ Nay quod Arcite / in earnest by my fey
 God helpe me so / me list ful yuele pleyo
 ¶ This Palamon / gan knytte his browes tweye 1128
 It nere quod he to thee / no greet honour
 ffor to be fals / ne for to be traitour
 To me / þat am thy cosyn and thy brother
 Ysworn ful depe / and ech of vs til oother 1132
 That neuere for to dyen in the peyne
 Til þat deeth / departe shal vs tweyne
 Neither of vs / in loue to hyndre oother
 Ne in noon oother cas / my leeue brother 1136
 But þat thou sholdest' trewely forthren me
 In euery cas / as I shal forthren thee
 This was thyn ooth / and myn also certeyn [leaf 17]
 I woot right wel / thou darst it nat withseyen 1140
 Thus artow of my conseil out of doute

And now / thow woldest' falsly been aboute
 To loue my lady / whom I loue and serue
 And euere shal / til þat myn herte sterue 1144
 Nay certes false Arcite / thow shalt nat so
 I loued hire first / and tolde thee my wo
 As to my conseil / and to my brother sworn
 To forthre me / as I haue toold biforn 1148
 ffor which / thou art ybounden as a knyght'
 To helpen me / if it lay in thy myght
 Ór elles artow fals / I dar wel seyn
 ¶ This Arcite / ful proudly spak ageyn 1152
 Thow shalt quod he / be rather fals than I
 And thou art fals / I telle thee outrely
 ffor paramour' I loued hire first er thow
 What wiltow seyn / thou wistest nat yet now 1156
 Wheither she be / a womman or goddesse
 Thyn is / affeccioñ of hoolynesse
 And myn is loue / as to a creature
 ffor which / I tolde thee myn auenture 1160
 As to my cosyn / and my brother sworn
 I pose / that thow louedest hire biforn
 Wostow nat wel / the olde clerkes sawe
 That / who shal yeue a louere any lawe ¶ Quis legem det amantibus.
 Loue is a gretter lawe / by my pan
 Than may be yeue / of any erthely man
 And therefore / positif lawe and swich decree
 Is broken al day for loue in ech degree 1168
 A man moot nedes loue / maugree his heed
 He may nat flee it' thogh he shokde be deed
 Al be she mayde / or wydwe / or elles wyf
 And eek' it is nat likly al thy lyf 1172
 To stonden in hir grace / namoore shał I
 ffor wel thou woost' thy seluen verraily
 That thou and I / be dampned to prison'
 Perpetuelly / vs gayneth no raunsoñ 1176
 We stryuen / as dide / the houndes for the boon

They foughte al day / and yet hir part was noon
 Ther cam a kyte / whil they weren so wrothe
 And baar away the boon / bitwixe hem bothe 1180
 And therefore / at the kynges court my brother
 Ech man for hym self / ther is noon oother
 Loue if thee list for I loue and ay shal
 And soothly / leue brother this is al 1184
 Heere in this prison / moote we endure
 And euerich of vs / take his auenture
 ¶ Reet was the strif / and long / bitwix hem tweye (lf 17, back)
 ¶ If that I hadde / leyser for to seye. 1188
 But to theeffect / it happed on a day
 To telle it yow / as shortly as I may
 A worthy duc that highite Perotheus
 That felawe was / to duc Theseus 1192
 Syn thilke day / that they were children lite
 Was come to Atthenes / his felawe to visite
 And for to pleye / as he was won[t] to do
 ffor in this world / he loued no man so 1196
 And he loued hym / als tendrely agayn
 So wel they louede / as olde bookes sayn
 That whan þat oon was deed / soothly to telle
 His felawe wente / and soughte hym down in helle 1200
 But of that storie / list me nat to write
 Duc Perotheus / loued wel Arcite
 And hadde hym knowe at Thebes yeer by yeer
 And finally / at requeste and preyere 1204
 Of Perotheus / with outhen any raunson
 Duc Theseus / hym leet out of prison
 ffrely to goon / wher þat hym liste ouer al
 In swich a gyse / as I you tellen shal 1208
 ¶ This was the forward / pleyedly for tendite
 Bitwixen Theseus / and hym Arcite
 That if so were / þat Arcite were yfounde
 Euere in his lif / by day / or nyght or stounde 1212
 In any contree / of this Theseus

- And he were caught it was acorded thus
 That with a swerd / he sholde lese his heed
 Ther nas / noon oother remedie ne reed 1216
 But taketh his leue / and homward he *him* spedde
 Lat hym be war / his nekke lith to wedde
 ¶ How greet a sorwe / suffreth now Arcite
 The deeth he feeleth / thurgh his herte smyte 1220
 He wepeth / wayleth / crieth pitously
 To sleen hym self / he waiteth priuely
 He seyde allas / that day þat he was born
 Now is my prison / worse than biforn 1224
 Now is me shape / eternally to dwelle
 Nat in my purgatorie / but in helle
 Allas / þat euere knew I Perotheus
 ffor elles / hadde I. dwelled with Theseus 1228
 Yfetered in his prison euere mo
 Thanne hadde I been in blisse *and* nat in wo
 Oonly / the sighte of hire / whom þat I serue
 Though þat I neuere / hir grace may deserue 1232
 Wolde han suffised / right ynough for me
 O deere cosyn / Palamon quod he
 Thyn is the victorie / of this auenture [leaf 18]
 fful blisfully in prison maistow dure 1236
 In prison ? certes nay / but in Paradys
 Wel hath ffortune / y-turned thee the dys
 That hast the sighte of hire / and I thabsence
 ffor possible is / syn thou hast hire presence 1240
 And art a knyght a worthy and an able
 That som cas / syn ffortune is chaungeable
 Thow maist to thy desir / som tyme atteyne
 But I / þat am exiled and bareyne 1244
 Of alle grace / and in so greet dispeir
 That ther nys erthe / water / fir / ne eir
 Ne creature / þat of hem maked is
 That may me heele / or doon confort in this 1248
 Wel oughte I sterue / in wanhope and distresse

farwel / my lif / my lust' and my gladnesse	
¶ Allas / why pleynten folk' so in commune	
Of puruicauce of god / or of ffortune	1252
That yeueth hem ful ofte / in many a gyse	
Wel better / than they kan hem self deuysse	
Som man desireth / for to han richesse	
That cause is of his moerdre / or greet siknesse	1256
And som man wolde / out of his prisoñ fayn	
That in his hous / is of his meynce slayn	
Infinite harmes / been in this mateere	
We witen nat' what [thing] we preyen heere	1260
We faren / as he that dronke is as a Mous	
A dronke man woot wel / þat he hath an hous	
But he noot' which the righte wey is thider	
And to a dronke man / the wey is slider	1264
And certes / in this world so faren we	
We seken faste / after felicitee	
But we goon wrong' ful often trewely	
Thus may we seyn alle / and namely I	1268
That wende / and hadde a greet opinion'	
That if I myghte / escapen from prisoñ	
Thanne hadde I been in ioye / and perfit heele	
That now / I am exiled fro my wele	1272
Syn þat I may nat' seen you Emelye	
I nam but deed / ther nys no remedye	
¶ Vp on that oother syde / Palamon	
Whan þat he wiste / Arcite was agon	1276
Swich sorwe he maketh / þat the grete tour	
Resounded / of his youlyng' and clamour	
The pure fettres / on his shynes grete	
Weren / of his bittre salte teeres wete	1280
Allas quod he / Arcita cosyn myn	
Of al oure strif / god woot the fruyt is thyn	
Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large	[leaf 18, back
And of my wo / thow yeuest litel charge	1284
Thou mayst / syn thou hast wysdom and manhede	

Assemblen / alle the folk / of oure kynrede
 And make a werre / so sharpe on this Citee
 That by som auenture / or som treetee 1288
 Thow mayst haue hire to lady and to wyf
 ffor whom / þat I moste nedes lese my lyf
 ffor / as by wey of possibilittee
 Sith thou art at thy large / of prison free 1292
 And art a lord / greet is thyn auauntage
 Moore than is myn / þat sterue here in a cage
 ffor I moot wepe / and wayle whil I lyue
 With al the wo / þat prison may me yeue 1296
 And eek with peyne / þat loue me yeueth also
 That doubleth / al my torment / and my wo
 Ther with / the fyr of Ialousie vp sterte
 With Inne his brest and hente him by the herte 1300
 So woodly / that he lyk was to biholde
 The Boxtree / or the Asshen dede and colde
 ¶ Thanne seyde he / o cruuel gooddes þat gouerne
 This world / with byndyng of youre word eterne 1304
 And writen in the table of Atthamaunt
 Youre parlement and youre eterne graunt
 What is mankynde / moore vn to you holde
 Than is the sheepe / þat rouketh in the folde 1308
 ffor slayn is man / right as another beest
 And dwelleth eek / in prison and arrest
 And hath siknesse / and greet aduersitee
 And ofte tymes / gilt[e]les pardee 1312
 ¶ What gouernance / is in this prescience
 That gilt[e]les / tormenteth Innocence
 And yet encresseth this / al my penaunce
 That man is bounden / to his observaunce 1316
 ffor goddes sake / to letten of his wille
 Ther as a beest / may al his lust fulfille
 And whan a beest is deed / he hath no peyne
 But after his deeth / man moot wepe and pleyne 1320
 Though in this world / he haue care and wo

With outen doute / it may stonden so
 The answe're of this / lete I to dyuynys
 But well I woot' þat in this world greet pyne ys 1324
 Allas / I se a serpent' or a theef /
 That many a trewe man / hath doon mescheef'
 Goon at his large / and where hym list' may turne
 But I moot been in prisoñ / thurgh Saturne 1328
 And eek thurgh Juno / Ialous and eek wood
 That hath destroyed / wel ny al the blood
 Of Thebes / with hise waste walles wyde (leaf 19)
 And venus / sleeth me on that oother syde 1332
 ffor Ialousie / and fere of hym Arcite
 ¶ Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite
 And lete hym / in his prisoñ stille dwelle
 And of Arcite / forth I wol yow telle 1336
 ¶ The sonne passeth / and the nyghtes longe
 Encressen double wise / the peynes stronge
 Bothe / of the louere / and the prisoner
 I noot' which hath the wofuller mester 1340
 ffor shortly for to seyn / this Palamoñ
 Perpetuelly / is dampned to prisoñ
 In cheynes and in fettres / to been deed
 And Arcite / is exiled vpon his heed 1344
 ffor euere mo / as out of that contree
 Ne neuere mo / he shal his lady see
Now loueres / axe I now this questioñ
 Who hath the worse / Arcite / or Palamoñ? 1348
 That oon may seen his lady / day by day
 But in prison / he moot dwelle alway
 That oother / wher hym list' may ride or go
 But seen his lady / shal he neuere mo 1352
 Now demeth as yow list' ye that kan
 ffor I wol telle forth / as I bigan.

¶ Explicit prima Pars.

¶ Sequitur pars secunda 𐀀

Whan that Arcite / to Thebes comen was
 fful ofte a day / he swelte and seyde allas 1356
 ffor seen his lady / shal he neuere mo
 And shortly / to concluden al his wo
 So muche sorwe / hadde neuere creature
 That is / or shal / whil þat the world may dure 1360
 His slepe / his mete / his drynke / is hym biraft'
 That lene he wexeth / and drye as is a shaft'
 Hise eyen holwe / and grisly to biholde
 His hewe falow / and pale as Asshen colde 1364
 And solitarie he was / and euere allone
 And waillynge al the nyght' makyng'e his mone
 And if he herde / song' or Instrument'
 Thanne wolde he wepe / he myghte nat be stent' 1368
 So feble eek were hise spiritz and so lowe
 And chaunged so / that no man koude knowe
 His speche nor his voys / though men it herde
 And in his geere / for al the world he ferde 1372
 Nat oonly / lik the louveris maladye [leaf 19, back]
 Of Hereos / but rather lyk Manye ¶ Mania
 Engendred / of humour malencolik'
 Biforn his owene Celle fantastik' 1376
 And shortly / turned was al vp so down
 Bothe habit / and eek disposicioun
 Of hym this woful louere daun Arcite
 ¶ What sholde I / al day of his wo endite 1380
 Whan he endured hadde / a yeer or two
 This cruuel torment' and this peyne *and* woo
 At Thebes in his contree / as I seyde
 Vp on a nyght / in sleepe as he hym leyde 1384
 Hym thoughte / how that the wynged god Mercurie
 Biforn hym stood / and bad hym to be murie
 His slepy yerde / in hond he bar vprighte
 An hat he werede / vp hise heris brighte 1388

Arrayed was this god / as I took keepe
 As he was / whan þat Argus took his sleepe
 And seyde hym thus / to Atthenes shaltou wende
 Ther is thee shapen / of thy wo an ende 1392
 And with that word / Arcite wook' and sterte
 Now trewely / hou soore þat me smerte
 Quod he / to Atthenes / riġht now wol I fare
 Ne for the drede of deeth / shal I nat spare 1396
 To se my lady / that I loue and serue
 In hire presence / I recche nat to sterue
 ¶ And with that word / he caughte a greet Mirour
 And saugh / þat chaunged was al his colour 1400
 And saugh his visage / al in another kynde
 And riġht anon / it ran hym in his mynde
 That sith his face / was so disfigured
 Of maladye / the which he hadde endured 1404
 He myghte wel / if þat he bar hym lowe
 Lyue in Atthenes / eueremoore vnknowe
 And seen his lady / wel ny day by day
 And riġht anon / he chaunged his array 1408
 And cladde hym / as a poure laborer
 And al allone / saue oonly a Squier
 That knew his priuete / and al his cas
 Which was disguised / pourely as he was 1412
 To Atthenes / is he goon the nexte way
 And to the court' he wente vp on a day
 And at the gate / he profreth his seruyse
 To drugge and drawe / what so men wol deuysse 1416
 And shortly / of this matere for to seyn
 He fil in office / with a Chamberleyn
 The which þat dwellynge was with Emelye
 ffor he was wys / and koude soone espye 1420
 Of euery seruaūt which that serueth here [leaf 20]
 Wel koude he / hewen wode / and water bere
 ffor he was yong / and myghty for the nones
 And ther to / he was long / and big' of bones 1424

To doon / that any wight / kan hym deuyse
 A yeer or two / he was in this seruyse
 Page of the chambre / of Emelye the brighte
 And Philostrate / he seyde þat he highte 1428
 But half / so wel / biloued a man as he
 Ne was ther neuere in Court' of his degree
 He was so gentil of his condicioun
 That thurghout al the Court' was his renou
 1432
 They seyden / that it were a charitee
 That Theseus / wolde enhauncen his degree
 And putten hym / in worshipful seruyse
 Ther as he myghte / his vertu excercise 1436
 And thus / with Inne a while / his name is spronge
 Bothe of hise dedes / and his goode tonge
 That Theseus / hath taken hym so neer
 That of his chambre / he made hym a Squier 1440
 And gaf him gold / to mayntene his degree
 And eek' men broghte hym / out of his contree
 ffrom yeer to yeer / ful pryuely his rente
 But honestly / and slyly he it spente 1444
 That no man wondred / how þat he it hadde
 And thre yeer in this wise / his lif he ladde
 And bar hym so / in pees / and eek in werre
 Ther was no man / þat Theseus hath derre 1448
 And in this blisse / lete I now Arcite
 And speke I wole / of Palamon a lite
IN derknesse and horrible / and strong prison
 Thise seuen yeer / hath seten Palamon 1452
 fforpyned / what for wo / and for distresse
 Who feeleth / double soor heuynesse
 But Palamon / that loue destreyneth so
 That wood out of his'wit' he goth for wo 1456
 And eek ther to / he is a prisoner
 Perpetuelly / noght oonly / for a yer
 ¶ Who koude ryme in englyssh proprely
 His martirdom / for sothe it am nat I . 1460

Therefore I passe / as lightly as I may
 ¶ It fel / that in the seuenthe yer in May
 The thridde nyght^t as olde bookes seyn
 That al this storie / tellen moore pleyn 1464
 Were it^t by auenture or / destyne
 As whan a thyng is shapen / it shal be
 That soone after the mydnyght^t Palamon
 By helpyng^t of a freend / brak his prison 1468
 ¶ And fleeth the Citee / faste as he may go [leaf 20, back]
 ffor he hade yeue / his gayler drynke so
 Of a Clarree maad / of a certeyn wyn
 Of Nercotikes / and Opie of Thebes fyn ¶ Opium Thebaicum.
 That al that nyght^t thogh^h þat men wolde him shake
 The gayler sleepe / he myghte nat awake
 ¶ And thus he fleeth / as faste as euere he may
 The nyght^t was short^t and faste by the day 1476
 That nodes cost^t he moot hym seluen hyde
 And til a groue / faste ther bisyde
 With dredeful foot^t thanne stalketh Palamon
 ffor shortly / this was his opinion) 1480
 That in that groue / he wolde hym hyde al day
 And in the nyght / thanne wolde he take his way
 To Thebes ward / his freendes for to preye
 On Theseus / to helpe him to werreye 1484
 And shortly / outhere he wolde lese his lif
 Or wynnem Emelye / vn to his wyf
 This is theeffect^t and his entente pleyn
 ¶ Now wol I turne / to Arcite ageyn 1488
 That litel wiste / how ny þat was his care
 Til þat ffortune / had brog^ht him in the snare
The bisy larke / messenger of day
 Salueth in hir song / the morwe gray 1492
 And firy Phebus / riseth vp so brighte
 That al the Orient^t laugheth of the lighte
 And with hise stremes / dryeth in the greues
 The siluer dropes / hangynge on the leues 1496

And Arcita / that is in the court Roial
 With Theseus / his Squier principal
 Is risen / and looketh on the myrie day
 And for to doon / his obseruaunce to May 1500
 Remembrynge / on the poynt of his desir
 He on a Courser / startlynge as the fir
 Is riden in to the feeldes / hym to pleye
 Out of the Court were it a myle or tweye 1504
 And to the groue / of which þat I yow tolde
 By auenture / his wey / he gan to holde
 To maken hym / a gerland / of the greues
 Were it of wodebynde / or hawethorn leues 1508
 And loude he song ayeyn the sonne shene
 May / with alle thy floures and thy grene
 Wel come be thou / faire fresshe May
 In hope / þat I som grene gete may 1512
 And from his courser / with a lusty herte
 In to a groue / ful hastily he sterte
 And in a path / he rometh vp and down
 Ther as by auenture / this Palamon 1516
 Was in a busshe / that no man myghte hym se [leaf 21]
 ffor soore aferd of his deeth / thanne was he
 No thyng ne knew he / that it was Arcite
 God woot he wolde haue trowed it ful lite 1520
 But sooth is seyde / go sithen many yeres
 That feeld hath eyen / and the wode hath eres
 It is ful fair / a man to bere hym euene
 ffor al day / meeteth men at vnset steuene 1524
 fful lital woot Arcite of his felawe
 That was so ny / to herknen al his sawe
 ffor in the busshe / he sitteth now ful stille
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite / hadde romed al his fille 1528
 And songen al the roundel lustily
 In to a studie / he fil al sodeynly
 As doon thise loueres / in hir queynte geres
 Now in the crope / now down in the breres 1532

Now vp / now down / as boket' in a welle
 Right as the friday / soothly for to telle
 Now it shyneth / now it reyneth faste
 Right so / kan geery Venus ouer caste 1536
 The hertes of hir folk / right as hir day
 Is gereful / right so chaungeth she array
 Selde is the friday / al the wowke ylike
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite had songe / he gan to sike 1540
 And sette hym down / with outen any moore
 Allas quod he / that day þat I was bore
 How longe Iuno / thurgh thy crueltee
 Woltow werreyen Thebes the Citee 1544
 Allas / ybroght is to confusiõ
 The blood roial / of Cadme and Amphioñ ¶ Cadmus
 Of Cadmus / which þat was the firste man
 That Thebes bulte / or first the toun bigan 1548
 And of the Citee / first was crowned kyng'
 Of his lynage am I / and his of spryng /
 By verray ligne / as of the stok roial
 And now I am / so caytyf / and so thral 1552
 That he / that is my mortal enemy
 I serue hym / as his squier pourely
 And yet / dooth Iuno me / wel moore shame
 ffor I dar noght' biknowe myn owene name 1556
 But ther as I / was wont' to highte Arcite
 Now highte I Philostrate / noght worth a myte
 Allas thou felle Mars / allas Iuno
 Thus hath youre Ire / oure kynrede al fordo 1560
 Saue only me / and wrecched Palamoñ
 That Theseus / martireth in prison
 And ouer al this / to sleen me outrelly
 Loue hath / his firy dart' so brennyngly 1564
 Ystiked / thurgh my trewe careful herte [leaf 21, back]
 That shapen was my deeth / erst than my sherte
 Ye sleen me / with youre eyen Emelye
 Ye been the cause / wherfore þat I dye 1568

Of al the remenant' of myn oother care
 Ne sette I nat' the montance of a tare
 So þat I koude / doon aught' to youre plesauce
 And with that word / he fil down in a traunce' 1572
 A longe tyme / and after he vp sterte
 ¶ This Palamon / þat thoughte þat thurgh his herte
 He felte a coold swerd / sodeynliche glyde
 ffor Ire he quook / no lenger wolde he byde 1576
 And whan þat he / had herd Arcites tale
 As he were wood / with face / deed and pale
 He stirte hym vp / out of the buskes thikke
 And seide Arcite / false traytour wikke 1580
 Now artow hent' that louest my lady so
 ffor whom þat I haue / al this peyne and wo
 And art my blood / and to my conseil sworn
 As I ful ofte / haue seyde thee heer biforn 1584
 And hast byiaped heere / duc Theseus
 And falsly / chaunged hast / thy name thus
 I wol be deed / or elles thou shalt dye
 Thou shalt nat / loue my lady Emelye 1588
 But I wol loue hire oonly / and namo
 ffor I am Palamon / thy mortal foo
 And though þat I no wepene haue in this place
 But out of prison / am astart by grace 1592
 I drede noght / þat outhur thou shalt dye
 Or thou ne shalt nat' louen Emelye
 Chees which thou wolt' or thou shalt nat' astarte
 ¶ This Arcite / with ful despitous herte 1596
 Whan he hym knew / and hadde his tale herd
 As fiers as leon' / pulled out his swerd
 And seyde thus / by god þat sit aboue
 Nere it / þat thou art' sik' and wood for loue 1600
 And eek' þat thou no wepne hast' in this place
 Thou sholdest neuere / out of this groue pace
 That thou ne sholdest' dyen of myn hond
 ffor I defye / the seurete and the bond 1604

- Which that thou seist þat I haue maad to thee
 What verray fool / thynk' wel / þat loue is fre
 And I wol loue hire / mawgree al thy myght
 But for as muche / thou art a worthy knyght' 1608
 And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille
 Haue heer my trouthe / tomorwe I wol nat faile
 With oute wityng' of any oother wight
 That heere / I wol be founden as a knyght' 1612
 And bryngen harneys / right ynough for thee [leaf 22]
 And chese the beste / and leue the worste for me
 And mete and drynke / this nyght wol I brynge
 Ynough for thee / and clothes for thy beddyng 1616
 And if so be / that thou my lady wynne
 And sle me in this wode / ther I am Inne
 Thow mayst wel haue thy lady / as for me
 ¶ This Palamon answerde / I graunte it thee 1620
 And thus they been departed / til amorwe
 Whan ech of hem / had leyd his feith to borwe
 O Cupide / out of alle charitee
 O regne / þat wolt no felawe haue with thee 1624
 fful sooth is seyde / þat loue ne lordshipe
 Wol noght' hir thankes / haue no felaweshipe
 Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamon
 Arcite is riden anon / vn to the toun 1628
 And on the morwe / er it were dayes light'
 fful priuely / two harneys hath he dight'
 Bothe suffisaunt' and mete to darreyne
 The bataille in the feeld' / bitwix hem tweyne 1632
 And on his hors / allone as he was born
 He carieth / al the harneys / hym biforn
 And in the groue / at tyme and place yset'
 This Arcite / and this Palamon ben met' 1636
 To chaungen / gan the colour in hir face
 Right as the nunters / in the regne of Trace
 That stondesth at the gappe with a spere
 Whan hunted is / the leon and the bere 1640

- And hereth hym / come russhyng^t in the greues
 And breketh / bothe bowes / and the leues
 And thynketh / heere cometh my mortal enemy
 With oute faile / he moot be deed / or I; 1644
 ffor outh^r / I moot sleen hym at the gappe
 Or he moot sleen me / if þat me myshappe
 So ferden they / in chaungyng^t of hir hewe
 As fer / as euerich of hem oother knewe 1648
 ¶ Ther nas no good day ne no saluyng^t
 But streight^t with outen word / or rehersyng^t
 Euerich of hem / heelp^e for to armen oother
 As freenly / as he were his owene brother 1652
 And after that^t with sharpe speres stronge
 They foynen ech at oother wonder longe
 Thou mygh^test wene / that this Palamon
 In his fightyng^t were [as] a wood leon 1656
 And as a crueel Tigre was Arcite
 As wilde bores / gonne they to smyte
 That frothen whit as foom / for Ire wood
 Vp to the Anclee / foghte they in hir blood 1660
 ¶ And in this wise / I lete hem fightyng dwelle [leaf 22, back]
 And forth I wole / of Theseus yow telle
The destinee / Ministre general
 That executeth / in the world ouer al 1664
 The purueiaunce / that god hath seyn biforn
 So strong it is / þat though the world had sworn
 The contrarie of a thyng^t by ye or nay
 Yet somtyme / it shal fallen on a day 1668
 That falleth nat eft^t with Inne a thousand yeere
 ffor *certainly* / oure appetites heere
 Be it^t of werre / or pees / or hate / or loue
 Al is this reuled / by the sighte aboue 1672
 ¶ This mene I now / by mygh^ty Theseus
 That for to hunten / is so desirus
 And namely / at the grete hert in May
 That in his bed / ther daweth hym no day 1676

That he nys clad / and redy for to ryde
 With hunte and horn / and houndes hym bisyde
 ffor in his huntynge. hath he swich delit
 That it is / al his ioye and appetit 1680
 To been hym self / the grete hertes bane
 ffor after Mars / he serueth now dyane
 ¶ Cleer was the day / as I haue toold er this
 And Theseus / with alle ioye and blis 1684
 With his ypolita / the faire queene
 And Emelye / clothed al in grene
 On huntynge be they riden roially
 And to the groue / that stood ful faste by 1688
 In which ther was an hert' as men hym tolde
 Duc Theseus / the streighte wey hath holde
 And to the launde / he rideth hym ful right/
 ffor thider was the hert' wont haue his flight 1692
 And ouer a brook / and so forth in his weye
 This duc. wol han a cours at hym or tweye
 With houndes / swiche as hym list comaunde
 ¶ And whan this duc' was come vn to the launde 1696
 Vnder the sonne he looketh / and anon
 He was war / of Arcite and Palamon
 That foughten breme / as it were bores two
 The brighte swerdes / wenten to and fro 1700
 So hidously / that with the leeste strook'
 It semed / as it wolde fille an ook'
 But what they were / no thyng' he ne woot'
 This duc' his courser / with his spores smoot' 1704
 And at a stert' he was bitwix hem two
 And pulled out a swerd / and cride hoo
 Namooore / vp on peyne of lesynge of youre heed
 By myghty Mars / he shal anon be deed 1708
 That smyteth any strook'. that I may seen [leaf 23]
 But telleth me / what mystiers men ye been
 That been so hardy / for to figheten heere
 With outen Iuge / or oother Officere 1712

As it were / in a lystes roially
 ¶ This Palamon / answerde hastily
 And seyde / sire / what nedeth wordes mo
 We haue / the deeth / disserued bothe two 1716
 Two woful wrecches been we / two caytyues
 That been encombred / of oure owene lyues
 And as thou art a rightful lord and Iuge
 Ne yeue vs / neither mercy ne refuge 1720
 But sle me first for seinte charitee
 But sle my felawe eek' as wel as me
 Or sle hym first. for though thou knowest it lite
 This is thy mortal foo / this is Arcite 1724
 That fro thy lond / is banysshied on his heed
 ffor which / he hath deserued to be deed
 ffor this is he / þat cam vn to thy gate
 And seyde / þat he highte Philostrate 1728
 Thus hath he iaped thee / ful many a yer
 And thou hast' maked hym thy chief Squier
 And this is he / that loueth Emelye
 ffor sith the day is come / þat I shal dye 1732
 I make pleynty / my confessiõ
 That I am / thilke woful Palamon
 That hath / thy prison broken wikkedly
 I am thy mortal foo / and it am I 1736
 That loueth so hoote / Emelye the brighte
 That I wol dye / present in hir sighte
 Therefore I axe deeth / and my Iuise
 But sle my felawe / in the same wise 1740
 ffor bothe / han we deserued to be slayn
 ¶ This worthy duc' answerde anon agayn
 And seyde / this is a short conclusiõ
 Youre owene mouth / by youre confessiõ 1744
 Hath dampned yow / and I wol it recorde
 It nedeth noght / to pyne yow with the corde
 Ye shal be deed / by myghty Mars the rede
 ¶ The queene anon / for verray wommanhede 1748

Gan for to wepe / and so dide Emelye
 And alle the ladyes / in the compaignye
 Greet pitee was it^t as it thoughte hem alle
 That euere / swich a chaunce sholde falle 1752
 ffor gentil men they were / of greet estaat^t
 And no thyng^t but for loue was this debaat^t
 And saugh hir bloody woundes / wyde and soore
 And alle crieden / bothe lasse and moore 1756
 Haue mercy Lord / vp on vs wommen alle [leaf 23, back]
 And on hir bare knees / adoun they falle
 And wolde haue kist his feet^t ther as he stood
 Til at the laste / aslaked was his mood 1760
 ffor pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
 And though / he first^t for Ire quook and sterte
 He hath considered / shortly in a clause
 The trespass of hem bothe / and eek the cause 1764
 And al though þat his Ire / hir gilt accused
 Yet in his resoñ / he hem bothe excused
 And thus / he thoghte wel þat euery man
 Wol helpe hym self in loue / if that he kan 1768
 And eek^t deliuere hym self / out of prisoñ
 And eek^t his herte hadde compassion
 Of wommen / for they wepen euere in oon
 And / in his gentil herte / he thoughte anon 1772
 And softe vn to hym self / he seyde fy s
 Vp on a lord / that wol haue no mercy ¶ Notate domini.
 But been a leon^d / bothe in word and dede
 To hem / þat been in repentañce and drede 1776
 As wel / as to a proud despitous man
 That wol maynteyne / that he first bigan
 That lord / hath litel of discrecioñ
 That in swich cas / kan no diuisioñ 1780
 But weyeth / pride and humblesse after oon
 And shortly / whan his Ire / is thus agoon
 He gan to looken vp / with eyen lighte
 And spak thise same wordes / al on highte 1784

- ¶ The god of loue / A benedicite
 How myghty / and how greet a lord is he
 Ayeyns his myght^r ther gayneth none obstacles
 He may be cleped a god / for hise myracles 1788
 ffor he kan maken / at his owene gyse
 Of euerich herte / as þat hym list diuyse
 Lo heere this Arcite / and this Palamon
 That quitly weren / out of my prison 1792
 And myghte / han lyued in Thebes roially
 And witen / I am hir mortal enemy
 And þat hir deth / lith in my myght also
 And yet hath loue / maugree hir eyen two 1796
 [Y-]Broght hem hyder / bothe for to dye
 Now looketh / is nat that an heigh folye
 ¶ Who may [nat] been a fole / but if he loue
 Bihoold / for goddes sake þat sit aboue 1800
 Se how they blede / be they noght wel arrayed
 Thus hath hir lord / the god of loue ypayed
 Hir wages / and hir fees / for hir seruyse
 And yet they wenen / for to been ful wyse 1804
 That seruen loue / for aught that may bifalle
 [leaf 24]
 But this is yet^r the beste game of alle
 That she / for whom they han this Iolitee
 Kan hem ther fore / as muche thank / as me 1808
 She woot^r namoore / of al this hoot fare
 By god / than woot a Cokkow of an hare
 But all moot ben assayed / hoot and coold^r
 A man moot ben a fool / or yong^r or oold^r 1812
 I woot it by my self / ful yore agon
 ffor in my tyme / a seruant was I oon
 And therefore / syn I knowe of loues peyne
 And woot hou soore / it kan a man distreyne 1816
 As he / þat hath / ben caught ofte in his laas
 I yow foryeue / al hoolly this trespaas
 At requeste of the queene / þat kneleth heere
 And eek of Emelye / my suster deere 1820

- And ye shul bothe / anon vn to me swere
 That neuere mo / ye shal my contree dere
 Ne make werre vp on me nyght ne day
 But been my freendes / in al that ye may 1824
 I yow foryeue / this trespas euery deel
 And they him sworn / his axynge faire *and* weel
 And hym of lordshipe / and of mercy preyde
 And he hem graunteth *grace* / and thus he seyde 1828
THO speke / of roial lynage and richesse
 Though þat she were a queene or a princesse
 Ech of you bothe / is worthy doutelees
 To wedden whan tyme is doutelees 1832
 I speke / as for my suster Emelye
 ffor whom ye haue / this strif *and* Ialousye
 Ye woot your self she may nat wedden two
 Atones / though ye fighten eueremo 1836
 That oon of you / al be hym looth or lief/
 He moot[e] pipen / in an yuy leef
 This is to seyn / she may nat now han bothe
 Al be ye neuer so Ialouse / ne so wrothe 1840
 And for thy / I yow putte in this degree
 That ech of yow / shal haue his destyne
 As hym is shape / and herkneth in what wyse
 Lo heere your ende / of that I shal deuyse 1844
My wyl is this / for plat conclusiõ
 With outen / any repplicaciõ
 If that you liketh / take it for the beste
 That euerich of you / shal goon where hym leste 1848
 ffirely / with outen raunson / or daunger
 And this day fifty wykes / fer ne ner
 Euerich of you / shal brynge an hundred knyghtes
 Armed for lystes / vp at alle righes 1852
 ¶ Al redy / to darreyne hire by bataille [leaf 24, back]
 And this bihote I yow / with outen faille
 Vp on my trouthe / and as I am a knyght
 That wheither of yow bothe þat hath myght 1856

This is to seyn / that wheither he or thow
 May *wit* his hundred / as I spak of now
 Sleen his contrarie / or out of lystes dryue
 Thanne shal I yeue / Emelya to wyue 1860
 To whom *pat* ffortune / yeueth so fair a grace
 Tho lystes / shal I maken in this place
 And god so wisly / on my soule rewe
 As I shal euene Iuge been and trewe 1864
 Ye shul noon oother ende / *wit* me maken
 That oon of yow / ne shal be deed or taken
 And if yow thynketh / this is weel ysayd
 Seyeth youre ays / and holdeth you apayd 1868
 This is youre ende / and youre conclusiõ
 ¶ Who looketh lightly now / but Palamoñ
 Who spryngeth vp for ioye / but Arcite
 Who kouthe telle / or who kouthe endite 1872
 The ioye / *pat* is maked in the place
 Whan Theseus / hath doon so fair a grace
 But doun on knees / wente every maner wight
 And thonken hym / *wit* al hir herte and myght 1876
 And namely the Thebans often sithe
 And thus with good hope / and *wit* herte blithe
 They taken hir leue / and homward gonne they ride
 To Thebes / with hise olde walles wyde 1880

¶ Explicit secunda pars

¶ Sequitur pars tercia

I trowe / men wolde deme it necligence
 If I foryete / to tellen the dispence
 Of Theseus / that gooth so bisily
 To maken vp / the lystes roially 1884
 That swich a noble Theatre / as it was
 I dar wel seyn / in this world ther nas
 The circuit / a myle was aboute
 Walled of stoon / and dyched al with oute 1888
 Round was the shape / in manere of compaas

ful of degrees / the heichte of sixty pas
 That whan a man / was set / on o degree
 He lette nat' his felawe for to see 1892

¶ Estward / ther stood a gate of Marbul whit/
 Westward right swich another in the opposit'

¶ And shortly to concluden / swich a place [leaf 25]
 Was noon in erthe / as in so litel space 1896
 ffor in the lond / ther was no crafty man
 That geometrie or Ars Metrik kan
 Ne portreitour / ne keruere of ymages
 That Theseus / ne yaf [him] mete and wages 1900
 The Theatre / for to maken and deuyse
 And for to doon / his ryte and sacrificise
 He Estward / hath vp on the gate aboute
 In worshipe of Venus goddessse of loue 1904
 Doon make an Auter / and an Oratorie
 And on the westward / in memorie
 Of Mars / he maked hath right swich another
 That coste largely / of gold a fother 1908
 And Northward / in a Touret / on the wal
 Of Alabastre whit' and reed coral
 An Oratorie / riche for to see
 In worshipe of Dyane of Chastitee 1912
 Hath Theseus doon wroght' in noble wyse
 ¶ But yet' hadde I foryeten to deuyse
 The noble keruyngt and the portreitures
 The shape / the contenaunce and the figures 1916
 That weren / in thise Oratories thre
 ¶ first' in the temple of Venus / maystow se
 Wroght' on the wal / ful pitous to biholde
 The broken slespes / and the sikes colde 1920
 The sacred teeris / and the waymentyng
 The firy strokes / and the desiryng
 That loues seruauntz / in this lyf enduren
 The othes / that her couenantz assuren 1924
 Plesaunce and hope / desir foolhardynesse

Beautee and youthe / bauderie richesse Charmes and force / lesynges flaterye Despense / bisynesse and Ialouslye	1928
That wered of yelewe gooldes a gerland And a Cokkow / sittynge on hir hand ffestes / Instrumentz / caroles daunces Lust and array / and alle the circumstaunces	1932
Of loue / whiche þat I rekned haue / and rekne shal By ordre / weren peynted on the wal And mo / than I kan make of mencioñ ffor soothly / al the mount of Citheroñ	1936
Ther Venus / hath hir principal dwellynge Was shewed on the wal / in portreyynge With al the gardyn / and the lustynesse Nat was foryeten / the Porter ydelnesse	1940
Ne Narcisus the faire / of yore agon And yet the folye / of kyng Salamon ¶ And eek the grete strengthe of Ercules	[leaf 25, back]
Thenchaumentz of Medea and Circes Ne of Turnus / with the hardy fiers corage The riche Cresus / kaytyf / in seruage Thus may ye seen / þat wysdom ne richesse	1944
Beautee ne sleighte / strengthe hardynesse Ne may with Venus / holde champartie ffor as hir list the world than may she gye Lo alle thise folk so caught were in hir las	1948
Til they for wo / ful ofte seyde allas Suffiseth heere / ensamples oon or two And though / I koude rekene a thousand mo	1952
The statue of Venus / glorious for to se Was naked / fletynge in the large see And fro the nauele doun / al couered was With wawes grene / and brighte as any glas	1956
A Citole / in hir right hand / hadde she And on hir heed / ful semely for to se A Rose gerland fressh / and wel smellynge	1960

- Aboute hir heed / hir dowues flikerynge
 Biform hire / stood hir sone Cupido
 Vp on his shuldres / wynges hadde he two 1964
 And blynd he was / as it was often seene
 A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighte and kene
 ¶ Why sholde I noghit / as wel eek telle yow al
 The portreiture / that was vp on the wal 1968
 Witte Inne the temple / of myghty Mars the rede
 Al peynted was the wal / in lengthe and brede
 Lyk to the estres / of the grisly place
 That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace 1972
 In thilke colde / frosty Region
 Ther as Mars / hath his souereyn mansioñ
 ¶ first on the wal / was peynted a forest
 In which ther dwelleth / neither man ne best 1976
 With knotty knarry / bareyne trees olde
 Of stubbes sharpe / and hidouse to biholde
 In which ther ran / a rumbel and a swough
 As though a storm / sholde bresten euery bough 1980
 And downward from an hille / vnder a bente
 Ther stood the temple of Mars Armypotente
 Wroght al of burned steel / of which the entree
 Was long and streit and gastly for to see 1984
 And ther out came a rage / and suche a veze
 That it made / al the gate for to rese
 The Northren lyght in at the dores shoon
 ffor wyndowe / on the wal ne was ther noon 1988
 Thurgh which men myghten / any light discerne
 The dore was al / of Adamant eterne
 Yclenched / ouerthwart and endelongt [leaf 26:
 With Iren tough / and for to make it strongt 1992
 Euery pyler the temple to sustene
 Was tonne greet of Iren bright and shene
 ¶ Ther saugh I first the dirke ymaginyngt
 Of felonye / and the compassyngt 1996
 The cruuel Ire / reed as any gleede

The pykepurs / and the pale drede	
The smylere / with the knyfe vnder the cloke	
The shepne / brennynge / <i>with</i> the blake smoke	2000
The tresoñ / of the mordrynge in the bedde	
The open werre / <i>with</i> woundes al bibledde	
Contek' with blody knyf' and sharpe manace	
Al ful of chirkyng'. was that sory place	2004
¶ The sleere of hym self / yet saugh I ther	
His herte blood / hath bathed al his heer	
The nayl ydryuen / in the shode a nyght	
The colde deeth / with mouth gapyng' vp right	2008
Amyddes of the temple / sat meschaunce	
With discomfort' and sory contenaunce	
¶ Yet saugh I woodnesse / laughynge in his rage	
Armed compleint' out hees / and fiers outrage	2012
The careyne in the busk' <i>with</i> throte yeorue	
A thousand slayn / and nat oon of qualm ystorue	
The tiraunt' with the pray by force yraft'	
The toun destroyed / ther was no thy[ng laft'] [1 in a later hand]	
¶ Yet saugh I brent' the shippes hoppesteres	
The hunte strangled / with the wilde beres	
The sowe / freten the child right in the Cradel	
The Cook yscalded / for al his longe ladel	2020
¶ Noght was foryeten / by the Infortune of Marte	
The Cartere / ouer ryden with his Carte	
Vnder the wheel / ful lowe / he lay adoun	
¶ Ther were also / of Martes diuisioun	2024
The laborer / and the Bocher and the Smyth	
That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his Styth	
¶ And al aboue / depeynted in a tour	
Saugh I Conquest' sittynge in greet honour	2028
With the sharpe swerd / ouer his heed	
Hangynge / by a soutil twynes threed	
¶ Depeynted was / the slaughtre of Iulius	
Of grete Nero / and of Antonius	2032
Al be þat thilke tyme / they were vnborn	

Yet was hir deth / depeynted ther biforn
 By manasyng of Mars / right by figure
 So was it shewed in that portreiture 2036
 As is depeynted / in the Certres aboute
 Who shal be slayn / or elles deed for loue
 Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde [leaf 26, back]
 I may nat rekene hem alle though I wolde 2040
The Statue of Mars / vp vn a Carte stood
 Armed / and looked grym as he were wood
 And ouer his heed / ther shynen two figures
 Of sterres / that been cleped in scriptures 2044
 That oon Puella / that oother Rubeus
 This god of Armes / was arrayed thus
 A wolf ther stood / biforn hym at his feet
 With eyen rede / and of a man he eet 2048
 With soutil pencil / was depeynted this storie
 In redoutynge / of Mars and of his glorie
Now / to the temple / of Dyane the chaste
 As shortly as I kan I wol me haste 2052
 To telle yow / al the descripsioun
 Depeynted been the walles vp and down
 Of huntyng / and of shamefast chastitee
 ¶ Ther saugh I / how woful Calistopee 2056
 Whan þat Diane / agreued was with here
 Was turned / from a womman to a Bere
 And after was she maad the loode sterre ¶ Vrsa maior
 Thus was it peynted / I kan sey yow no ferre 2060
 Hir sone is eek a sterre as men may see
 ¶ Ther saugh I Dane / yturned til a tree
 I mene nat the goddesse Diane
 But Penneus doughter / which þat highte Dane 2064
 ¶ Ther saugh I Attheon / an hert ymaked
 ffor vengeance / þat he saugh Diane al naked
 I saugh / how þat hise houndes / haue hym caught
 And freeten hym / for þat they knewe hym naught 2068
 ¶ Yet peynted / [was] a litel further moor

How Atthalante / hunted the wilde boor
 And Meleagree / and many another mo
 ffor which Dyane / wroghte hym care and wo 2072
 ¶ Ther saugh I / many another wonder storie
 The whiche / me list nat^t drawn to memorie
 ¶ This goddesse on an hert^t ful wel hye seet^t
 With smale houndes / al aboute hir feet^t 2076
 And vndernethe hir feet^t she hadde a mcone
 Wexyng it was / and sholde wanye soone
 In gaude grene / hir statue clothed was
 With bowe in honde / and Arwes in a cas 2080
 Hir eyen caste she / ful lowe adoun
 Ther Pluto / hath his derke regioun
 ¶ A womman trauaillynge / was hire biforn
 But for hir child / so longe was vnborn 2084
 fful pitously / Lucyna / gan she calle
 And seyde helpe / for thou mayst^t best of alle
 Wel koude he peynten lifly / that it wroghte [leaf 27]
 With many a floryn / he the hewes boghte 2088
NOw been the lystes maad / and Theseus
 That at his grete cost / arrayed thus
 The temples / and the Theatre euery deel
 Whan it was doon / hym lyked wonder weel 2092
 But stynte I wole / of Theseus a lite
 And speke of Palamon / and of Arcite
 ¶ The day approacheth / of hir retournynge
 That euerich / sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge 2096
 The bataille to darreyne / as I yow tolde
 And til Atthenes / hir couenantz for to holde
 Hath euerich of hem / broght^t an hundred knyghtes
 Wel armed for the werre / at alle rightes 2100
 And sikerly / ther trowed many a man
 That neuere sithen / that the world bigaⁿ
 As for to speke / of knyghthod of hir hond^t
 As fer / as god hath maked see or lond^t 2104
 Nas of so fewe / so noble a compaignye

ffor euery wight^t that louede chivalrye
 And wolde his thankes / han a passant name
 Hath preyd / þat he myghte been of that game 2108
 And wel was hym / that ther to chosen was
 ffor if ther fille tomorwe swich a caas
 Ye knowen wel / þat euery lusty knyght^t
 That loueth paramours / and hath his myght^t 2112
 Were it in Engelond / or elles where
 They wolde hir thankes / wilnen to be there
 To fighte for a lady / benedicitee
 It were a lusty sighte / for to see 2116
 ¶ And right so / ferden they with Palamon
 With hym / ther wenten knyghtes many on
 Som wol ben armed in an haubergeon
 And in bristplate / and in a light gypon 2120
 And somme woln haue / a paire plates large
 And somme woln haue / a Puce sheeld / or a targe
 Somme woln ben armed / on hir legges weel
 And haue an Ax / and somme a Mace of steel 2124
 Ther is no newe gyse / that it nas old
 Armed were they / as I haue yow told
 Everych / after his opinioñ
 Ther maistow seen / comynge with Palamon 2128
 Lygurge hym self^t the grete kyng of Trace
 Blak was his berd / and manly was his face
 The cercles / of hise eyen in his heed
 They gloweden / bitwyxen yelow and reed 2132
 And lik a grifphon / looked he aboute
 With kempe heeris / on hise browes stoute
 Hise lymes grete / hise brawnes harde and stronge [leaf 27, back]
 Hise shuldres brode / hise armes rounde and longe 2136
 And as the gyse was in his contree
 fful hye / vpon a Chaar of gold / stood [he¹] [1 in a later hand]
 With foure white boles in the trays
 In stede of Cote Armure / ouer his harnays 2140
 With nayles yelewe / and brighte as any gold^t

He hadde a Beres skyn / colblak / for old
 His longe heer / was kembd / bihynde his bak
 As any Rauenes fethere / it shoon for blak' 2144
 A wrethe of gold arm greet / of huge wighte
 Vpon his heed / set ful of stones brighte
 Of fyne Rubyes / and of dyamauntz
 Aboute his Chaar / ther wenten white Alauntz 2148
 Twenty and mo / as grete as any steer
 To hunten at the leonⁿ or¹ / the deer [1 MS. or / or]
 And folwed hym / with mosel faste ybounde
 Colered of gold / and tourettes fyled rounde 2152
 An hundred lordes / hadde he in his route
 Armed ful wel / with hertes stierne and stoute
 With Arcite / in stories as men fynde
 The grete Emetreus / the kyng of Inde 2156
 Vp on a steede bay / trapped in steel
 Couered in clooth of gold / dyapred weel
 Cam ridyng / lyk^t the god of Armes Mars
 His Cote Armure / was of clooth of Tars 2160
 Couched with perles / white and rounde and grete
 His sadel / was of brend gold newe ybete
 A Mantel [was] / vp on his shulder hangyng
 Brat ful of Rubyes rede / as fyr sparklyng 2164
 His crise heer / lyk ryinges was yronne
 And that was yelow / and glytered as the sonne
 His nose was heigh / hise eyen bright citryⁿ
 Hise lippes rounde / his colour was sangwyn 2168
 A fewe frakenes / in his face yspreynd^t
 Bitwixen yelow / and somdel blak ymeynd^t
 And as a leonⁿ / he his lookyng^t caste
 Of fyue and twenty yeer / his age I caste 2172
 His berd was wel bigonne for to spryng
 His voys / was as a trompe thondryng
 Vp on his heed / he wered of laurer grene
 A gerland^t / fressh / and lusty for to sene 2176
 Vp on his hand / he bar for his deduyt^t

An Egle tame / as any lilye whyt
 An hundred lordes / hadde he *with* hym there
 Al armed saue hir heddes / in al hir gere 2180
 fful richely / in alle maner thynges
 ffor trusteth wel / þat dukes / Erles kynges
 Were gadered / in this noble compaignye [leaf 28]
 ffor loue / and for encrees of chiualrye 2184
 Aboute this kyng^t ther ran on euery part^t
 fful many a tame leon^d / and leopard^t
 And in this wise / thise lordes alle and some
 Been on the Sunday to the Citee come 2188
 Aboute pryme / and in the toun alight
 ¶ This Theseus / this duc^t this worthy knyght
 Whan he had broght hem / in to his Citee
 And Inned hem / euerich in his degree 2192
 He festeth hem / and dooth so greet labour
 To esen hem / and doon hem al honour
 That yet men weneth / þat no maner wit
 Of noon estaat^t ne koude amenden it 2196
 ¶ The Mynstralcye / the seruice / at the feeste
 The grete yiftes / to the meeste and leeste
 The riche array / of Theseus paleys
 Ne who sat^t first ne last vp on the deys 2200
 What ladyes fairest been / or best daunsynge
 Or which of hem / kan dauncen best and synge
 Ne who moost felyngly speketh of loue
 What haukes / sitten on the perche aboue 2204
 What houndes / ligger in the floor adoun
 Of al this / make I now no mencion
 But al theffect^t that thynketh me the beste
 Now cometh the point^t and herkneth if yow leste 2208
The sonday nyght^t er day bigan to sprynge
 Whan Palamon / the larke herde synge
 Al though it nere nat day / by houres two
 Yet song the larke / and Palamon also 2212
 With hooly herte / and with an heigh corage

He roos / to wenden on his pilgrymage
 Vn to the blisful Citherea benigne
 I mene Venus / honorable and digne 2216
 And in hir houre / he walketh forth a paas
 Vn to the lystes / ther hire temple was
 And doun he kneleth / with ful humble cheer
 And herte soor / and seyde in this manere 2220
Faireste of faire / o lady myn Venus ¶ The preyere
of Palamon.
¶ to Venus
goddesse of loue.
 Doughter to Ioue / and spouse of Vulcanus
 Thow glader / of the Mount of Citheron
 ffor thilke loue / thow haddest to Adoon 2224
 Haue pitee / of my bittre teeris smerte
 And taak myn humble preyere at thyn herte
 Allas / I ne haue / no langage to telle
 Theeffectes / ne the tormentz of myn helle 2228
 Myn herte / may myne harmes nat biwreie
 I am so confus / that I kan nocht seye
 But mercy lady bright that knowest weele [leaf 28, back]
 My thought and seest what harmes þat I feele 2232
 Considere al this / and rewe vp on my soore
 As wisly / as I shal for eueremoore
 Emforth my myghth thy trewe seruante be
 And holden werre / alwey with chastitee 2236
 That make I myn auow / so ye me helpe
 I kepe noght of Armes for to yelpe
 Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to haue victorie
 Ne renoun in this cas / ne veyne glorie 2240
 Of pris of Armes / blowen vp and doun
 But I wolde haue / fully possessioun
 Of Emelye / and dye in thy seruyse
 ffynd thow the manere / hou and in what wyse 2244
 I recche nat / but it may better be
 To haue victorie of hem / or they of me
 So that I haue / my lady in myne Armes
 ffor though so be / that Mars is god of Armes 2248
 Youre vertu is so greet in heuene aboue

That if yow list I shal wel haue my loue
 ¶ Thy temple wol I worshipe eueremo
 And on thyn Auter / where I ride or go 2252
 I wol doon sacrifice / and fires beete
 And if ye wol nat so / my lady sweete
 Thanne preye I thee / tomorwe / with a spere
 That Arcita / me thurgh the herte bere 2256
 Thanne rekke I noght / whan I haue lost my lyf
 Though that Arcita / wynne hire to his wyf
 This is theeffect and ende of my preyere
 Yif me my loue / thow blisful lady deere 2260
 ¶ Whan the orison / was doon of Palamon
 His sacrifice he dide / and that anon
 ful pitously / with alle circumstaunce
 Al telle I noght as now / his obseruaunce 2264
 But atte laste / the statue of Venus shook /
 And made a signe / wher by þat he took
 That his preyere / accepted was that day
 ffor thogh the signe / shewed a delay 2268
 Yet wiste he wel / þat graunted was his boone
 And with glad herte / he wente hym hoom ful soone
 The thridde houre in-equal that Palamon
 T Bigan / to Venus temple for to gon 2272
 Vp roos the sonne / and vp roos Emelye
 And to the temple of Dyane gan hye
 Hir maydens / þat she thider with hire ladde
 fful redily / with hem the fyr they ladde 2276
 Thencens / the clothes / and the remenant al
 That to the sacrifice / longen shal
 The hornes fulle of Meeth / as was the gyse [leaf 29]
 Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrificise 2280
 ¶ Smokyng the temple / ful of clothes faire
 This Emelye / with herte debonaire
 Hir body wessh / with water of a welle
 But hou she dide hir ryte / I dar nat telle 2284
 But it be / any thing in general

- And yet it were a game / to heeren al
 To hym þat meneth wel / it were no charge
 But it is good / a man been at his large 2288
 ¶ Hir brighte heer was kempd̄ vntressed al
 A coroune / of a grene ook / cerial
 Vp on hir heed was set ful fair and meete
 Two fyres / on the auter / gan she beete 2292
 And dide hir thynges / as men may biholde
 In Stace of Thebes / and thise bookes olde
 Whan kyndled was the fyr / with pitous cheere
 Vn to Dyane / she spak' as ye may heere 2296
 O chaste goddesse / of the wodes grene ¶ The preyere
 To whom bothe heuene and erthe and see is sene of Emelye / to
 Queene of the regne of Pluto derk / and lowe dyane goddesse
 Goddesses of maydens / that myn herte hast knowe 2300
 fful many a yeer / and woost what I desire
 As keepe me / fro thy vengeaunce and thyn Ire
 That Attheon / aboughte cruelly
 Chaste goddesse / wel wostow þat I 2304
 Desire / to ben a mayden al my lyf
 Ne neuere wol I be no loue ne wyf
 I am thow woost yet of thy compaignye
 A mayde / and loue huntynge and venerye 2308
 And for to walken / in the wodes wilde
 And noght to ben a wyf / and be with childe
 Noght wol I knowe / the compaignye of man
 Now helpe me lady / sith ye may and kan 2312
 ffor tho thre formes / þat thou hast in thee
 And Palamon / that hath swich loue to me
 And eek Arcite / that loueth me so soore
 This grace I preye thee with oute moore 2316
 And sende loue and pees / bitwixe hem two
 And fro me / turne away hir hertes so
 That al hire hoote loue / and hir desir
 And al hir bisy torment and hir fir 2320
 Be queynt or turned / in another place

- And if so be / thou wolt do me no grace
 And if my destynee / be shapen so
 That I shal nedes haue oon of hem two 2324
 As sende me hym / þat moost desireth me
 Bihoold goddesse / of clene chastitee
 The bittre teeris / that on my chekes falle [leaf 29, back]
 Syn thou art mayde / and kepere of vs alle 2328
 My maydenhede thou kepe and wel conserue
 And whil I lyue / a mayde I wol thee serue
 ¶ The fires brenne / vp on the Auter cleere
 Whil Emelye / was thus in hir preyere 2332
 But sodeynly / she saugh a sigfite queynte
 ffor right anon / oon of the fyres queynte
 And quyked agayn / and after that anon
 That oother fyr was queynt^t and al agon 2336
 And as it queynte / it made a whistlynge
 As doon these wete brondes in hir brennynge
 And at the brondes ende / out ran anon
 As it were / bloody dropes many oon 2340
 ffor which / so soore agast was Emelye
 That she was wel ny mad and gan to crye
 ffor she ne wiste / what it signyfyed
 But oonly for the feere / thus hath she cried 2344
 And weepe / that it was pitee for to heere
 And ther with al / Dyane gan appeere
 With bowe in honde / right as an^r hunteresse
 And seyde doghter / stynt thyn heuynesse 2348
 Among the goddes hye / it is affermed ¶ The answer
 And by eterne word / writen and confermed ¶ of Dyane
 ¶ to Emelye.
 Thou shalt ben wedded vn to oon of tho
 That han for thee / so muchel care and wo 2352
 But vn to which of hem / I may nat telle
 ffarwel / for I ne may no lenger dwelle
 The fires / whiche that on myn Auter brenne
 Shulle thee declare / er that thou go henne 2356
 Thyn auenture of loue / as in this cas

- And *with* that word / the Arwes in the Caas
 Of the goddessse / clateren faste and ryngē
 And forth she wente / and made a vanysshyngē 2360
 ffor which / this Emelye / astoned was
 And seyde / what amounteth this Allas
 I putte me / in thy proteccioñ
 Dyane / and in thy disposicioñ 2364
 And hoom she goth anon the nexte weye
 This is theeffect ther is namoore to seye
 The nexte houre of Mars folwyngē this
 T Arcite / vn to the temple walkēd is 2368
 Of fierse Mars / to doon his sacrificise
 With alle the rytes / of his payen wyse
 With pitous herte / and heigh deuocioñ
 Right thus to Mars / he seyde his orisoñ 2372
 O stronge god / that in the regnes colde
 Of Trace / honoured art and lord yholde
 ¶ And hast in euery regne / and euery lond
 Of armes / al the brydel in thyn hond 2376
 And hem fortunest as thee lyst deuysel
 Accepte of me / my pitous sacrificise
 If so be that my youthe may deserue
 And þat my myght be worthy for to serue 2380
 Thy godhede / þat I may been oon of thyne
 Thanne preye I thee / to rewe vp on my pyne
 ffor thilke peyne / and thilke hoothe fir
 In which / thou whilom brendest for desir 2384
 Whan þat thou vsedest the beautee
 Of faire yonge / fresshe Venus free
 And haddest hire / in armes at thy wille
 Al though thee ones / on a tyme mysfille 2388
 Whan Vulcanus / hadde caught thee in his las
 And foond thee liggyngē / by his wyf allas
 ffor thilke sorwe / that was in thyn herte
 Haue routhe as wel / vp on my peynes smerte 2392
 I am yong and vnkonyngē as thou woost

¶ The orisoñ of
 Arcite
 ¶ to Mars god
 of Armes

[leaf 30]

And as I trowe / with loue offended moost
 That euere was / any lyues creature
 ffor she / þat dooth me / al this wo endure 2396
 Ne reccheth neuere / wher I synke or fleete
 And wel I woot' er she me mercy heete
 I moot *with* strengthe / wynne hire in the place
 And wel I woot' *with*outen helpe or grace 2400
 Of thee / ne may my strengthe noght auaille
 Thanne helpe me lord / tomorwe in my bataille
 For thilke fyr / that whilom brente thee
 As wel / as thilke fyr / now brenneth me 2404
 And do / that I tomorwe haue victorie
 Myn be the trauaille / and thyn be the glorie
 Thy souereyn temple / wol I moost honouren
 Of any place / and alwey moost labouren 2408
 In thy plesañce / and in thy craftes stronge
 And in thy temple / I wol my baner honge
 And alle the Armes of my compaignye
 And euere mo / vn to that day I dye 2412
 Eterne fir / I wol biforn thee fynde
 And eek' to this auow / I wol me bynde
 My beard / myn heer / that hongeth long adoun
 That neuere yet / ne felte offensioun 2416
 Of rasour / nor of shere / I wol thee yeue
 And ben thy trewe *seruant* whil I lyue
 Now lord haue routhe vp on my sorwes soore
 Yif me the victorie / I aske thee namoore 2420
The preyere stynt' of Arcita the stronge
The rynges / on the temple dore that honge
 And eek' the dores / clatereden ful faste [leaf 30, back]
 Of which Arcita / som what hym agaste 2424
 The fyres brenden / vp on the Auter brighte
 That it gan / al the temple for to lighte
 And sweete smel / the ground anon vp yaf
 And Arcita / anon his hand vp haf' 2428
 And moore encens / in to the fyr he caste

With othere rytes mo / and atte last
 The Statue of Mars / bigan his hauberk ryng
 And *wit* that soun / he herde a *murmuryng* 2432
 fful lowe and dym / and seyde thus / Victorie
 for which / he yaf to Mars / honour and glorie
 And thus with ioye / and hope wel to fare
 Arcite anon / vn to his In is fare 2436
 As fayn as fowel / is of the brighte sonne
 ¶ And right anon / swich strif / ther is bigonne
 For thilke grauntyng' in the heuene aboue
 Bitwixe Venus / the goddesse of love 2440
 And Mars / the stierne god Armypotente
 That Iuppiter / was bisy it to stente
 Til that the pale / Saturnus the colde
 That knew so manye / of auentures olde 2444
 ffoond / in his olde experience and art'
 That he ful soone / hath plesed euery part'
 As sooth is seyde / elde hath greet auantage
 In elde / is bothe wysdom and vsage 2448
 Men may the olde at renne / and noght at rede
 Saturne anon / to stynten strif and drede
 Al be it' that it is / agayn his kynde
 Of al this strif / he gan remedie fynde 2452
 ¶ My deere doghter Venus / quod Saturne
 My cours / that hath so wyde for to turne
 Hath moore power / than woot any man
 Myn is the drenchyng' in the see so wan 2456
 Myn is the prison / in the derke cote
 Myn is the stranglyng' and hangyng' by the throte
 The *murmure* and the cherles rebellyng'
 The groynyng' / and the pryuce empoysonyng' 2460
 I do vengeance / and pleyn correccioñ
 Whil[es] I dwelle / in signe of the leon
 Myn is the ruyn / of the hye halles
 The fallyng' / of the toures / and of the walles 2464
 Vp on the Mynour / or the Carpenter

I slow Sampson / shakynge the piler
 And myne be / the maladyes colde
 The derke tresons / and the castes olde 2468
 My lookyng' is the fader of pestilence
 Now weepe namoore / I shal doon diligence
 That Palamon / that is thyn owene knyght' [leaf 31]
 Shal haue his lady / as thou hast him high't 2472
 Though Mars shal helpe his knyght' yet nathelees
 Bitwixe yow / ther moot be som tyme pees
 Al be ye noght' of o compleccioñ
 That causeth al day swich diusion 2476
 I am thyn Aiel / redy at thy wille
 Weepe now namoore / I wol thy lust fulfille
 ¶ Now wol I stynten / of the goddes above
 Of Mars / and of Venus goddessse of love 2480
 And telle yow / as pleynly as I kan
 The grete effect' for which that I bygan

¶ Explicit' tercia pars

¶ Sequitur pars quarta

Greet was the feeste / in Atthenes that day
 And eek / the lusty seson of that May 2484
 Made euery wight / to been in such plesaunce
 That al that Monday / Iusten they and daunce
 And spenten it' in Venus heigh seruyse
 But by the cause / that they sholde ryse 2488
 Eerly / for to seen the grete fight
 Vn to hir reste / wenten they at nyght'
 And on the morwe / whan þat day gan sprynge
 Of hors and harneys / noyse and claterynge 2492
 Ther was in the hostelryes al aboute
 And to the paleys / rood ther many a route
 Of lordes / vp on steedes and palfreys
 Ther maystow seen diuisynge of harneys 2496
 So vnkouth and so riche / and wroght so weel
 Of goldsmythrye / of browdyng / and of steel

The sheeldes brighte / testeres / and trappures	
Gold hewen helmes / hauberkes / Cote Armures	2500
Lordes in paramentz / on hir courseres	
Knyghtes of retenue / and eek Squieres	
Nailynge the speres / and helmes bokelynge	
Giggyng of sheeldes / with layneres lacyng	2504
There as nede is / they weren no thyng ydel	
The fomy steedes / on the golden brydel	
Gnawynge / and faste the Armurers also	
With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro	2508
Yemen on foyte / and communes many oon	
With shorte staues / thikke as they may goon	
Pypes / trompes / Nakerers / Clariounes	
That in the bataille / blowen bloody sounes	2512
The paleys / ful of peples vp and down	[leaf 31, back]
Heere thre / ther ten / holdyng hir questioñ	
Dyuynyng / of thise Thebane knyghtes two	
Somme seyden thus / somme seyde it shal be so	2516
Somme helden with hym / with the blake berð	
Somme with the balled / somme with the thikke herð	
Somme seyde / he looked grymme / and he wolde fighte	
He hath a sparth / of twenty pound of wighte	2520
Thus was the halle / ful of diuynyng	
Longe after / that the sonne gan to spryng	
T he grete Theseus / that of his sleepe awaked	
With Mynstralcie / and noyse þat was maked	2524
Heeld yet the chambre / of his Paleys riche	
Til that the Thebane knyghtes / bothe yliche	
Honored / were / in to the paleys fet'	
Duc' Theseus / was at a wyndow set'	2528
Arrayed / right as he were a god in Trone	
The peple / preesseth thiderward ful soone	
Hym for to seen / and doon hoigh reuerence	
And cek to herkne / his heste and his sentence	2532
¶ An herauð on a Scaffold made an Oo	
Til al the noyse of peple was ydo	

And whan he saugh / the noyse of peple al stille
 Tho shewed he / the myghty dukes wille 2536
 ¶ The lord / hath of his heih discrecion
 Considered / that it were destruccioñ
 To gentil blood / to fighten in the gyse
 Of mortal bataille / now in this emprise 2540
 Wherefore / to shapen / þat they shal nat dye
 He wolde / his firste purpos modifye
 ¶ No man ther fore vp peyne of los of lyf
 No maner shot polax ne short[e] knyf 2544
 In to the lystes sende / ne thider brynge
 Ne short swerd for to stoke / with poynt bitynge
 No man ne drawe / ne bere by his syde
 Ne no man shal / vn to his felawe ryde 2548
 But o cours / with a sharpe ygrounde spere
 ffoyne if hym list on foote / hym self to were
 And he / that is at meschief shal be take
 And noght slayn / but be broght vn to the stake 2552
 That shal ben ordeyned / on either syde
 But thider he shal by force / and there abyde
 ¶ And if so be / the ¹chieftayn be take [1 chl-ef-]
 On outhere syde / or elles sleen his make 2556
 No lenger shal the turneiynge laste
 God spede you / gooth forth / and ley on faste
 With long swerd / and with Maces / fighteth youre fille
 Gooth now youre wey / this is the lordes will 2560
 The voys of peple / touched the heuene [leaf 32]
 So loude cride they / with murie steuene
 God saue swich a lord / that is so good
 He wilneth no destruccioñ of blood 2564
 Vp goon the trompes / and the melodye
 And to the lystes / rit the compaignye
 By ordinance / thurgh out the Citee large
 Hanged with clooth of gold and nat with sarge 2568
 ¶ fful lik a lord / this noble duc gan ryde
 Thise two Thebans / vp on either side

And after rood / the queene and Emelye	
And after that' another compaignye	2572
Of oon and oother / after hir degre	
And thus they passen / thurgh out the Citee	
And to the lystes / come they by tyme	
It nas not of the day / yet fully pryme	2576
Whan set was Theseus / ful riche and hye	
Ypolita the queene and Emelye	
And othere ladys / in degrees aboute	
Vn to the seettes preesseth al the route	2580
And westward / thurgh the gates vnder Marte	<small>.i. sub Marte</small>
Arcite / and eek the hondred of his parte	
With baner reed / is entred right anon	
¶ And in that selue moment Palamon	2584
Is vnder Venus / Estward in the place	
With Baner whyt / and hardy chiere <i>and</i> face	
In al the world / to seken vp and down	
So euene / with outen variacioun	2588
Ther nere / swiche compaignyes tweye	
ffor ther was noon so wys þat koude seye	
That any hadde / of oother auauntage	
Of worthynesse / ne of estaat ne age	2592
So euene were [they] chosen / for to gesse	
And in two renges / faire they hem dresse	
¶ Whan þat hir names / rad were euerichon	
That in hir nombre / gyle were ther noon	2596
Tho were the gates shet' and cried was loude	
Do now youre deuoir / yonge knyghtes proude	
¶ The heraudes / lefte hir prikyng vp and down	
Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun	2600
Ther is namoore to seyn / but west and Est	
In goon the speres / ful sadly in arrest'	
In gooth the sharpe spore / in to the syde	
Ther seen men / who kan Iuste <i>and</i> who kan ryde	2604
Ther shyueren shaftes / vp on sheeldes thikke	
He feeleth / thurgh the herte spoon the prikke	

Vp spryngen speres / twenty foot on highte
 Out gooth the swerdes / as the siluer brighte 2608
 The helmes they tohewen / and toshrede [leaf 32_a back]
 Out brest the blood / with stierne stremes rede
 With myghty maces / the bones they tobreste
 He thurgh the thikkeste / of the throng gan threste 2612
 Ther semblen steedes stronge / and doun gooth al
 He rolleth vnder foot' as dooth a bal
 He foyneth on his feet' with his tronchon
 And he hym hurtleth / with his hors adoun 2616
 He thurgh the body is hurt' and sithen ytake
 Maugree his heed / and broght vn to the stake
 As forward was right ther he moste abyde
 Another lad is / on that oother syde 2620
 ¶ And som tyme / dooth hem Theseus to reste
 Hem to fresshen / and drynken if hem leste
 fful ofte a day / han thise Thebanes two
 Togydre ymet' and wroght his felawe wo 2624
 Vnhorsed hath / ech oother of hem tweye
 Ther nas no Tygre in the vale of Galgopheye
 Whan þat hir whelpe is stole / whan it is lite
 So crueel on the hunte / as is Arcite 2628
 ffor Ielous herte / vpon this Palamon
 Ne in Belmarye / ther nys so fel leon
 That hunted is / or for his hunger wood
 Ne of his praye / desireth so the blood 2632
 As Palamon / to sleen his foo Arcite
 The Ielous strokes / on hir helmes byte
 Out renneth blood / on bothe hir sydes rede
 ¶ Som tyme an ende / ther is of euery dede 2636
 ffor er the sonne / vn to the reste wente
 The stronge kyng' Emetreus / gan hente
 This Palamon / as he faught with Arcite
 And made his swerd / depe in his flessħ to byte 2640
 And by the force of twenty / is he take
 Vnyolden / and ydrawe vnto the stake

And in the rescus / of this Palamon
 The stronge kyngt lygurge / is born adoun 2644
 And kyngt Emetreus / for al his strengthe
 Is born out of his sadel / a swerdes lengthe
 So hitte him Palamon er he were take
 But al for noght / he was broght to the stake 2648
 His hardy herte / myghte hym helpe naught
 He moste abyde / whan that he was caught
 By force / and eek by composicioñ
 ¶ Who sorweth now / but woful Palamon 2652
 That moot namoore / goon agayn to fighite
 And whan þat Theseus / hadde seyn this sighte
 Vn to the folk / þat foghten thus echon
 He cryde / hoo namoore / for it is doon 2656
 ¶ I wol be trewe Iuge / and no partie [leaf 33]
 Arcite of Thebes / shal haue Emelie
 That by his fortune / hath hire faire ywonne
 Anon / ther is a noyse of peple bigonne 2660
 ffor Ioye of this / so loude and heighe with alle
 It semed / that the lystes sholde falle
What kan now faire venus doon aboute
 What seith she now / what dooth this queene of loue
 But wepeth so / for wantynge of hir wille
 Til that hir teeres / in the lystes fille
 She seyde / I am ashamed doutelees
 ¶ Saturnus seyde / doghter hoold thy pees 2668
 Mars hath his wille / his knyght hath al his boone
 And by myn heed / thow shalt been esed soone
The trompes / with the loude Mynstralcie
 The heraudes / that ful loude yolle and crie 2672
 Been in hire wele / for Ioye of Daun Arcite
 But herkneth me / and stynteth now a lite
 Which a myracle / ther bifel anon
 ¶ This fierse Arcite / hath of his helm ydon 2676
 And on a Courser / for to shewe his face
 He priketh endelongt the large place

Lokyng vpward vp on Emelye
 And she agayn / hym caste a freendlich eye 2680
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 And was al his [in] chiere / as in his herte
 ¶ Out of the ground / a furie Infernal sterte 2684
 ffrom Pluto sent at requeste of Saturne
 ffor which his hors / for fere gan to turne
 And leepe aside / and foundred as he leepe
 And er that Arcite / may taken keepe 2688
 He pighte hym / on the pomel of his heed ¶ *Nota periculum.*
 That in the place he lay / as he were deed
 His brest tobrosten / with his sadel bowe
 As blak he lay / as any cole or crowe 2692
 So was the blood / yronnen in his face
 Anon he was / yborn out of the place
 With herte soor / to Theseus paleys
 Tho was he koruen / out of his harneys 2696
 And in a bed ybrought / ful faire and blyve
 ffor he was yet in memorie / and alyue
 And alwey / crynge after Emelye
 ¶ Duc Theseus / with al his compaignye 2700
 Is comen hoom / to Atthenes his Citee
 With alle blisse / and greet solempnitee
 Al be it that this Auenture was falle
 He nolde nocht disconforten hem alle 2704
 Men seyde eek that Arcite shal nat dye
 He shal been heeled / of his maladye
 ¶ And of another / thyng / they weren as fayn [leaf 33, back]
 That of hem alle / was ther noon yslayn 2708
 Al were they soore yhurt and namely oon
 That *with* a spere / was thirled his brest boon
 To othere woundes / and to broken armes
 Somme hadden salues / and somme hadden charmes 2712
 ffermacies of herbes / and eek saue
 They dronken / for they wolde hir lymes haue

ffor which this noble duc^e as he wel kan
 Conforteth / and honoureth euery man 2716
 And made reuel / al the longe nyght^e
 Vn to the straunge lordes / as was right^e
 Ne ther was holden / no disconfitynge
 But as a Iustes / or a tourneyng 2720
 ffor soothly / ther was no disconfiture
 ffor fallyng / nys nat but an Auenture
 Ne to be lad by force / vn to the stake
 Vnyolden / and with twenty knyghtes take 2724
 O persone allone with outen mo
 And haryed forth / by Arm[e] / foot^e and too
 And eke his steede / dryuen forth *with* staues
 With footmen / bothe yemen and eek knaues 2728
 It nas aretted hym no vileynye
 Ther may no man / clepen it cowardye
 ¶ ffor which anon / duc Theseus leet crye
 To stynten / alle rancour and enuye 2732
 The gree / as wel of o syde as of oother
 And eyther syde ylik^e as ootheres brother
 And yaf hem yiftes / after hir degree
 And fully / heeld a feeste / dayes three 2736
 And conuoyed / the kynges worthily
 Out of his toun / a Iournee largely
 And hoom wente euery man the righte way
 Ther was namoore / but fare wel / haue good day 2740
 Of this bataille / I wol namoore endite
 But speke of Palamon and of Arcyte
 S wellethe the brest of arcite / and the soore
 S Encresseth at his herte / moore and moore 2744
 The clothered blood / for any lechecraft^e
 Corrupteth / and is in his bouk ylast^e
 That neither veyne blood / ne ventusyng
 Ne drynke of herbes / may ben his helpyng 2748
 The vertu expulsif / or Animal
 ffro thilke vertu / cleped natural

Ne may the venym / voyden ne expelle
 The pipes of his longes / gonne to swelle 2752
 And euery lacerte / in his brest adoun
 Is shent' with venym and corrupcion
 Hym gayneth neither for to gete his lif' [leaf 84]
 Vomyt vpward / ne dounward laxatif' 2756
 Al is tobrosten / thilke Regioun
 Nature hath now / no dominacioun
 And certainly / ther Nature wol nat wirche
 ffare wel Phisik' go ber the man to chirche 2760
 This al and som / that Arcita moot dye
 ffor which / he sendeth / after Emelye
 And Palamon / that was his cosyn deere
 Thanne seyde he thus / as ye shal after heere 2764
 ¶ Naught may / the woful spirit in myn herte
 Declare o point' of alle my sorwes smerte
 To yow my lady / that I loue moost'
 But I biquethe / the seruyce of my goost' 2768
 To yow / abouen euery creature
 Syn þat my lyf / [it] may no lenger dure
 Allas the wo / allas the peynes stronge
 That I for yow haue suffred / and so longe 2772
 Allas the deeth / allas myn Emelye
 Allas / departyng of our compaignye
 Allas myn hertes queene / allas my wyf'
 Myn hertes lady / endere of my lyf/ 2776
 What is this world / what asketh men to haue
 Now with his loue / now in his colde graue
 Allone / with outen any compaignye
 ffare wel / my swete foo / myn Emelye 2780
 And softe taak me / in youre Armes tweye
 ffor loue of god / and herkneth what I seye
 I haue heer / with my cosyn Palamon
 Had strif and rancour/ many a day agon 2784
 ffor loue of yow / and for my Ialousye
 And Iuppiter / so wys my soule gye

To speken / of a seruañt proprely
 With alle circumstances trewely 2788
 That is to seyn / trouthe / honour knyghthede
 Wysdom / humblesse / estaat' and heigh kynrede
 fredom / and al that longeth to that Art
 So Iuppiter / haue of my soule part' 2792
 As in this world / right now ne knowe I non
 So worthy to ben loued as Palamon
 That serueth yow / and wol doon al his lyf
 And if that euere / ye shul ben a wyf 2796
 fforyet nat Palamon / the gentil man
 And *with* that word / his speche faille gan
 And from his herte / vp to his brest was come
 The coold of deeth / that hadde hym ouercome 2800
 And yet moore ouer / for in hise Armes two
 The vital strengthe is lost / and al ago
 Oonly / the intellect' with outen moore [leaf 34, back]
 That dwelled in his herte / syk and soore 2804
 Gan faille / when the herte felte deeth
 Dusked hise eyen two / and failed breeth
 But on his lady yet' caste he his eye
 His laste word / was mercy Emelye 2808
 His spirit changed hous / and wente ther
 As I cam neuere / I kan nat tellen wher
 Therefore I stynte / I nam no diuinistre
 Of soules / fynde I nat in this Registre 2812
 Ne me ne list' thilke opinions to telle
 Of hem / though þat they writen wher they dwelle
 Arcite is coold / ther Mars his soule gye
 Now wol I speken forth of Emelye 2816
 Shrighte Emelye / and howleth Palamon
 And Theseus / his suster took anon
 Swownynge / and baar hire fro the corps away
 What helpeth it' to tarien forth the day 2820
 To tellen how she weepe / bothe eue and morwe
 ffor in swich cas / wommen haue swich sorwe

- Whan þat hir housbond^d / is from hem ago
 That for the moore part^t they sorwen so 2824
 Or ellis / fallen in swich maladye
 That at the laste / certeinly they dye
 ¶ Infinite / been the sorwes and the teeres
 Of olde folk / and eek of tendre yeeres 2828
 In al the toun / for deeth of this Theban
 ffor hym ther wepeth / bothe chikd and man
 So greet a wepyng^g was ther noon certayn
 Whan Ector was ybroghit / al fressh yslayn 2832
 To Troye / allas the pitee þat was ther
 Cracchyng of chekes / rentyng eek of heer
 Why woldestow be deed / thise wommen crye
 And haddest gold ynough / and Emelye 2836
 ¶ No man / myghte gladen Theseus
 Sauynge / his olde fader Egeus
 That knew / this worldes transmutacioñ
 As he hadde / seyn it / vp and doun 2840
 Ioye after wo / and wo after gladnesse
 And shewed / hem ensamples and liknesse
Right as ther / dyed neuere man quod he ¶ Argumentum
 That he ne lyuede in erthe / in som degree 2844
 Right so / ther lyuede neuer man he seyde
 In al this world / þat som tyme he ne deyde
 This world / nys but a thurghfare ful of wo
 And we been pilgrymes / passyng to and fro 2848
 Deeth is an ende / of euery worldes soore
 And ouer al this / yet seyde he muchel moore
 To this effect^t ful wisely / to enhortē [leaf 35]
 The peple / that they sholde hem reconforte 2852
Duc Theseus / with al his bisy cure
 Cast now / wher that the sepulture
 Of goode Arcite / may best ymakē be
 And eek^t moost honorable in his degree 2856
 And at the laste / he took conclusioñ
 That ther as first^t Arcite and Palamoñ

Hadden for loue / the bataille hem bitwene	
That' in that selue groue / swoote and grene	2860
Ther as he hadde / hise amoureuse desires	
His compleynte / and for loue hise hote fires	
He wolde make a fyr / in which the office	
ffuneral / he mygh̄te al accomplice	2864
And leet comande anon / to hakke and hewe	
The okes olde / and leye hem on a rewe	
In colpons / wel arrayed for to brenne	
Hise Officers / with swifte feet they renne	2868
And ryden anon / at his comandement'	
And after / this / Theseus hath ysent'	
After a beere / and it al ouer spradde	
With clooth of gold / the richeste / þat he hadde	2872
And of the same suyte / he cladde Arcite	
Vp on his hondes / hadde he gloues white	
Eek on his heed / a coroune of laurer grene	
And in his hond / a swerd ful bright and kene	2876
He leyde hym bare the visage / on the beere	
Ther-with he weepe / that pitee was to heere	
And for the peple / sholde seen hym alle	
Whan it was day / he broghte hym to the halle	2880
That roreth / of the cryng' and the soun	
¶ Tho cam this woful Theban Palamon	
With flotery berd / and rugged ass̄hy heeres	
In clothes blake / ydropped al with teeres	2884
And passynge othere / of wepynge Emelye	
The rewefulleste / of al the compaignye	
[And] In as muche / as the seruyce sholde be	
The moore noble / and riche in his degree	2888
Duc Thescus / leet forth thre steedes brynge	
That trapped were in steel al gliterynge	
And couered with the armes of daun Arcite	
Vp on thise steedes / grete and white	2892
Ther sitten folk' of whiche oon baar his sheeld	
Another his spere / in his hondes heeld	

The thridde baar *wit* hym / his bowe Turkeys
 Of brend gold / was the caas / and eek the harneys 2896
 And riden forth a paas / with sorweful cheere
 Toward the groue / as ye shul after heere
 The nobleste of tne grekes / that ther were [leaf 35, back]
 Vp on hir shuldres / caryeden the beere 2900
 With slak paas / and eyen rede and wete
 Thurgh out the Citee / by the maister strete
 That sprad was al with blak' / and wonder hye
 Right of the same / is the strete ywrye 2904
 Vp on the right hond / wente olde Egeus
 And on that oother syde / duc' Theseus
 With vessel in hir hand / of gold ful fyn
 Al ful of hony / Milk' and blood and wyn 2908
 Eek Palamon / with ful greet compaignye
 And after that / cam woful Emelye
Wit fyr in honde / as was that tyme the gyse
 To do the office / of funeral seruyse 2912
High labour' and ful greet apparaillynge
 Was at the seruice / and the fyr makynge
 That with his grene tope / the heuen [raughte]
 And twenty fadme of brede / the armes straughte 2916
 This is to seyn / the bowes weren so brode
 Of stree first' ther was leyd ful many a lode
 But how the fyr / was maked vp on highte
 And eek' the names / that the trees highte 2920
 As ook' / firre / birch' / Aspe / Alder / holm / popeler
 Wylugh' / Elm / plane / Assh' / box / chasteyn / lynde / laurer
 Mapul / thorn / bech / hasel / Ew / whippeltre
 How they weren fild' / shal nat be toold for me 2924
 Ne hou the goddes ronnen vp and doun
 Disherited / of hire habitacioun
 In whiche they woneden / in reste and pees
 Nymphus / ffawnes / and Amadrides 2928
 Ne hou the beestes / and the briddes alle
 fledden for fere / whan the wode was falle


Ne how the ground / agast was of the light ^t	
That was nat wont ^t to seen the sonne bright ^t	2932
Ne how the fyr / was couched first with stree	
And thanne with drye stokkes / clouen a thre	
And thanne with grene wode and spicerye	
And thanne <i>with</i> clooth of gold / and <i>with</i> perrye	2936
And gerlandes / hangyng / with ful many a flour	
The Mirre / thencens / with al so greet odour	
Ne how Arcite / lay among al this	
Ne what richesse / aboute his body is	2940
Ne how that Emelye / as was the gyse	
Putte in the fyr / of funeral seruyse	
Ne how she swowned / whan men made fyr	
Ne what she spak ^t ne what was hir desire	2944
Ne what Ieweles / men in the fyre caste	
Whan þat the fyr was greet ^t and brente faste	
¶ Ne how somme caste hir sheeld / and somme hir spere	[1936]
And of hire vestimentz / whiche þat they were	2948
And coppes full of wyn / and Milk ^t and blood	
In to the fyr / that brente / as it were wood	
Ne how the grekes / with an huge route	
Tries riden / al the place aboute	2952
Vp on the left ^t hand / <i>with</i> a loud shoutyng	
And thries / with hir speres clateryng	
And thries / how the ladyes gonne crye	
And how / þat lad was homward Emelye	2956
Ne how Arcite / is brent to asshen colde	
Ne / how that lych wake / was yholde	
Al thilke nyght / ne how the grekes pleye	
The wake pleyes / ne kepe I nat to seye	2960
Who wrastleth best naked / with oille enoynt ^t	
Ne who that baar hym best ^t in no disioynt ^t	
¶ I wol nat tellen eek ^t how that they goon	
Hoom til Atthenes / whan the pley is doon	2964
But shortly to the point ^t thanne wol I wende	
And maken / of my longe tale an ende	

- B**y processe / and by lengthe of certeyn yeres
 Al styntyd is / the moornyng *and* the teres 2968
 Of grekes / by oon general assent
 Thanne semed me / ther was a parlement
 At Atthenes / vpon certein poyntz and caas
 Amongst the whiche poyntz / yspoken was 2972
 To haue with certein contrees alliañce
 And haue fully of Thebans obeissañce
 ffor which / this noble Theseus anon
 Leet senden / after gentil Palamon 2976
 Vnwist of hym / what was the cause and why
 But in hise blake clothes / sorwefully
 He cam / at his comandement in hye
 Tho sente / Theseus for Emelye 2980
 Whan they were set and hust was al the place
 And Thesens / abiden hadde a space
 Er any word / cam fram his wise brest
 Hise eyen sette he / ther as was his lest 2984
 And with a sad visage / he siked stille
 And after that right thus he seyde his wille
The firste moeuere of the cause aboue
 Whan he first made / the faire cheyne of loue 2988
 Greet was theeffect and heigh was his entente
 Wel wiste he why / and what ther of he mente
 ffor with that faire cheyne of loue he bond
 The fyr / the eyr / the water and the lond 2992
 In certeyn boundes / that they may nat flee
 That same prince / and that same moeuere quod he
 Hath stablissed / in this wrecched world adoun [leaf 36, back]
 Certeyn dayes / and duracioun 2996
 To al / that is engendrid in this place
 Ouer the which[e] day / they may nat pace
 Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge
 Ther nedeth noght noon Auctoritee allegge 3000
 ffor it is preued / by experience
 But that me list declaren my sentence

Thanne may men / by this ordre wel discerne
 That thilke moeuere / stable is and eterne 3004
 Wel may men knowe / but it be a fool
 That euery part' dirryueth from his hool
 ffor nature / hath taken his bigynnyng'
 Of no partie / or of cantel of a thyng' 3008
 But of a thyng' that parfit is and stable
 Descendynge so / til it be corrupable
 And therefore / of his wise purueiaunce
 He hath / so wel biset' his ordinaunce 3012
 That speses of thynges / and progression's
 Shullen enduren / by successioñs
 And nat eterne / with outen any lye
 This maystow vnderstonde / and seen it eye 3016
Loo the ook / þat hath so long' a norisshynge ¶ Exemplum
 ffrom tyme / þat it first' bigynneth sprynge
 And hath so long a lif / as we may see
 Yet at the laste / wasted is the tree 3020
 ¶ Considereth eek' how that the harde stoon ¶ Exemplum
 Vnder oure feet' on which we trede and goon
 Yit wasteth it' as it lyth by the weye
 The brode Ryuer / somtyme wexeth dreye 3024
 The grete toures / se we wane and wende
 Thanne may ye se / þat al this thyng' hath ende
 ¶ Of man and womman / seen we wel also
 That nedeth / in oon of these termes two 3028
 This is to seyn / in youthe / or elles age
 He moot be deed / the kyng' as shal a page
 Som in his bed / som in the depe see
 Som in the large feeld / as men may se 3032
 Ther helpeth noght' al goth that ilke weye
 Thanne may I seyn' / al this thyng' moot deye [1 se-yn]
 ¶ What maketh this / but Iuppiter the kyng'
 That is prince / and cause of alle thyng' 3036
 Conuertynge al / vn to his propre welle
 ffrom which it is dirryued / sooth to telle

And here agayns / no creature on lyue
 Of no degree / auailleth for to stryue 3040
 ¶ Thanne is it wysdom / as it thynketh me
 To maken vertu of necessitee
 ¶ And take it weel / that we may nat eschue [leaf 37]
 And namely / that to vs alle is due 3044
 And who so gruccheth ought' he dooth folye
 And rebel is / to hym that al may gye
 And certainly / a man hath moost honour
 To dyen / in his excellence and flour 3048
 Whan he is siker / of his goode name
 Thanne hath he doon / his freend ne hym no shame
 And gladder / oghte his freend been of his deeth
 Whan with honour / vp yolden is his breeth 3052
 Than whan his name / apalled is for age
 ffor al forgeten / is his vassellage
 Thanne is it best' as for a worthy fame
 To dyen / whan þat he is best of name 3056
 ¶ The contrarie of al this / is wilfulnesse
 Why grucchen we / why haue we heuynesse
 That goode Arcite / of Chiuallrie flour
 Departed is / with duetee and honour 3060
 Out of this foule prison of this lyf
 Why grucchen heere / his cosyn and his wyf
 Of his wel fare / that loued hem so weel
 Kan he hem thank ? nay god woot neuer a deel 3064
 That bothe his soule / and eek hem self offende
 And yet they mowe / hir lustes nat amende
What may I concluden / of this longe serye
 But after wo / I rede vs to be merye 3068
 And thanken Iuppiter / of al his grace
 And er that we / departen from this place
 I rede [that] we make / of sorwes two
 O parfit ioye / lastynge eueremo 3072
 And looketh now / wher moost sorwe is her Inne
 Ther wol we first' amenden and bigynne

- Suster quod he / this is my fulle assent'
 With all thavys / heere of my parlement' 3076
 That gentil Palamon / thyn owene knyght
 That serueth yow / with wille / herte / and myght
 And euere hath doon / syn þat ye first hym knewe
 That ye shul of your grace / vp on hym rewe 3080
 And taken hym / for housbonde and for lord
 Leue¹ me youre hond / for this is oure accord' [1 or Lene]
 Lat se now / of youre wommanly pitee
 He is a kynges brother sone pardee 3084
 And though he were / a poure bacheler
 Syn he hath serued yow / so many a yeer
 And had for yow / so greet Aduersitee
 It moste been considered / leeueth me 3088
 ffor gentil mercy / oghte to passen right'
 ¶ Thanne seyde he thus / to Palamon ful right'
 I trowe / ther nedeth litel sermonyng' [leaf 37, back]
 To make yow / assente to this thyng' 3092
 Com neer / and taak youre lady by the hond
 Bitwixen hem / was maad anon the bond
 That highte matrimoigne / or mariage
 By al the conseil / and the Baronage 3096
 ¶ And thus / with alle blisse and melodye
 Hath Palamon / ywedded Emelye
 And god / þat al this wyde world hath wrought
 Sende hym his loue / that it deere aboght' 3100
 ffor now is Palamon / in alle wele
 Lyuyng in blisse / in richesse and in heele
 And Emelye / hym loueth so tendrely
 And he hire / serueth so gentilly 3104
 That neuere / was ther no word hem bitwene
 Of Ialousie / or any oother tene
 Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye
 And God saue / al this faire compaignye Amen 3108
 ¶ Heere is ended the knyghtes tale 𐀀

¶ Heere folwen the wordes / bitwene the hoost
and the Millere 

When that the knyght had thus his tale ytold
In al the route / ne was ther yong ne oold
That he ne seyde / it was a noble storie
And worthy / for to drawn to memorie 3112
And namely the gentils euerichon
Oure hoost lough / and swoor so moot I gon
This gooth aright / vnbokeled is the Male
Lat se now / who shal telle another tale 3116
ffor trewely / the game is wel bigonne
Now telleth on sire Monk / if that ye konne
Sumwhat to quite with the knyghtes tale
The Millere / that for-dronken was al pale 3120
So that vnnethe / vp on his hors he sat'
He nolde aualen / neither hood ne hat'
Ne abyde no man / for his curteisie
But in Pilates voys / he gan to crie 3124
And swoor by Armes / and by blood / and bones
I kan a noble tale for the nones
With which / I wol now quite / the knyghtes tale
Oure hoost saugh / that he was dronke of ale 3128
And seyde / abyd Robyn my leue brother
Som better man / shal telle vs first another
Abyde / and lat vs werken thriftily [leaf 98]
¶ By goddes soule quod he / that wol nat I 3132
ffor I wol speke / or elles go my wey
Oure hoost answerde / tel on a deuele wey
Thou art a fool / thy wit is ouercome
¶ Now herkneth quod the Millere alle and some 3136
But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke / I knowe it by my soun
And therefore / if that I mysspeke or seye
Wyte it the Ale of Southwerk I [you] preye 3140

ffor I wol telle / a legende and a lyf
 Bothe of a Carpenter / and of his wyf
 How that a clerk / hath set the wrightes cappe
 ¶ The Reue answerde / and seyde stynt thy clappe 3144
 Lat be / thy lewed dronken harlotrye
 It is a synne / and eek a greet folye
 To apeyren any man / or hym defame
 And eek^t to bryngen wyues in swich fame 3148
 Thou mayst ynogh / of othere thynges seyn
 ¶ This dronke Millere / spak ful soone ageyn
 And seyde / leue brother Osewold^t
 Who hath no wyf / he is no Cokewold^t 3152
 But I sey nat therefore / that thou art oon
 Ther been ful goode wyues many oon
 And euere / a thousand goode / ayeyns oon badde
 That knowestow wel thy self / but if thou madde 3156
 Why artow angry / with my tale now
 I haue a wyf pardee / as wel as thou
 Yet nolde I / for the oxen in my plogh
 Take vp on me / moore than ynogh 3160
 As demen of my self / that I were oon
 I wol bileue wel / that I am noon
 An housbonde / shal nat been Inquisityf
 Of goddes pryuetee / nor of his wyf 3164
 So he may fynde goddes foyson there
 Of the remenant^t nedeth nat enquere
 ¶ What sholde I moore seyn / but this Millere
 He nolde his wordes / for no man forbere 3168
 But tolde his cherles tale in his manere
 Mathynketh / that I shal reherce it heere
 And therfore euery gentil wight I preye
 ffor goddes loue / demeth nat that I seye 3172
 Of yuel entente / but that I moot reherce
 Hir tales alle / be they bettre or werse
 Or elles / falsen som of my mateere
 And therefore / who so list it nat yheere 3176

Turne ouer the leef / and chese another tale
 ffor he shal fynde ynowe / grete and smale
 Of storial thyng^r that toucheth gentillesse [leaf 38, back]
 And eek moralitee / and hoolynesse 3180
 Blameth nat me / if that ye chese amys
 The Millere / is a cherl / ye knowe wel this
 So was the Reue / and othere manye mo
 And harlotrie // they tolden bothe two 3184
 Auyseth yow / putteth me out of blame
 And eek men shal nat maken ernest of game

[Slight break in the MS.]

¶ Heere bigynneth the Millere his tale.

WHilom / ther was dwellynge at Oxenford^t
 A riche gnof / that gestes heeld to bord 3188
 And of his craft^t he was a Carpenter
 With hym / ther was dwellynge a poure scoler
 Hadde lerned Art^t but al his fantasye *[painting of the Miller]*
 Was turned / for to lerne Astrologye 3192
 And koude / a certeyn of conclusioñs
 To demen / by Interrogacioñs
 If þat men asked hym / in certein houres
 Whan þat men sholde haue droghte or elles shoures 3196
 Or if men asked hym / what sholde bifalle
 Of euery thyng / I may nat rekene hem alle
 ¶ This clerk^t was cleped / hende Nicholas
 Of deerne loue he koude and of solas 3200
 And ther-to / he was sleigh / and ful priuee
 And lyk a mayden / meke for to see
 A chambre hadde he in that hostelrye
 Allone / with-uten any compaignye 3204
 fful fetisly ydight^t with herbes swoote
 And he hym self / as sweete as is the roote
 Of lycorys / or any Cetewale
 His Almageste / and bookes grete and smale 3208
 His Astrelabie / longynge for his Art/
 His Augrym stones / layen faire a part/
 On shelues / couched at his beddes heed
 His presse ycovered / with a faldyng reed 3212
 And all aboue / ther lay a gay Sautrie
 On which / he made a nyghtes melodie
 So swetely / that al the chambre rong^t
 And Angelus ad virginem / he song^t 3216
 And after that^t he song^t the kynges noote
 fful often / blessed was his myrie throte

And thus / this sweete clerk' his tyme spente
 After his freendes fyndyng' and his rente 3220
 ¶ This Carpenter / hadde wedded newe a wyf
 Which that he louede / moore than his lyf /
 Of xvij. yeer / she was of Age [leaf 39]
 Ialous he was / and heeld hire narwe in cage 3224
 ffor she was yong and wylde / and he was old
 And demed hym self' been lik' a Cokewold
 He knew nat Catoun / for his wit was rude
 That bad / man sholde wedde his simylitude 3228
 Men sholde wedden after hire estaat
 ffor youthe and elde / is often at debaat
 But sith that he / was fallen in the snare
 He moste endure / as oother folk his care 3232
 ¶ ffair was this yonge wyf / and ther with al
 As any wezele / hir body / gent and smal
 A ceynt she werede / ybarred al of silk
 A barmclooth [eek] / as whit as morne Milk 3236
 Vp on hir lendes / ful of many a goore
 Whit was hir smok / and broyden al bifoore
 And eek bihynde / on hir coler aboute
 Of colblak silk / *with*-Inne and eek *with*-oute 3240
 The tapes / of hir white voluper
 Were of the same suyte of hir coler
 Hir filet' brood of silk' and set ful hye
 And sikerly / she hadde a likerous eye 3244
 fful smale y pulled / were hire browes two
 And tho were bent / and blake as any sloo
 She was / ful moore blisful on to see
 Than is / the newe / pereionette tree 3248
 And softer / than the wolle is of a wether
 And by hir girdel / heeng a purs of lether
 Tasseled with grene / and *per*led *with* latoun
 In al this world / to seken vp and down 3252
 There nas no man so wys / þat koude thenche
 So gay a popelote / or swich a wenche

fful brighter / was the shynyng ^t of hir hewe	
Than in the tour / the noble yforged newe	3256
¶ But of hir song / it was / as loude and yerne	
As any swalwe / sittynge on a berne	
Ther to / she koude skippe / and make game	
As any kyde / or calf / folwyng ^e his dame	3260
Hir mouth was sweete / as bragot ^t or the Meeth	
Or hoord of Apples / leyd in hey or heeth	
Wynsynge she was / as is a ioly colt ^t	
Long as a Mast ^t and vprighte as a bolt	3264
A brooch sche baar / vp on hir loue coler	
As brood / as is the boos of a bokeler	
Hir shoes were laced / on hir legges hye	
She was a prymerole / a piggesnye	3268
ffor any lord / to leggen in his bedde	
Or yet ^t for any good yeman to wedde	
N ow sire / and eft sire / so bifel the cas	[leaf 39, back]
That on a day / this hende Nicholas	3272
ffil with this yonge wyf / to rage and pleye	
Whil that hir housbonde was at Oseneye	
As clerkes / ben ful subtile / and ful queynte	
And priuely / he caughte hire by the queynte	3276
And seyde ywis / but if ich haue my wille	
ffor deerne loue of thee / lemman I spille	
And heeld hire harde / by the haunche bones	
And seyde / lemman loue me al atones	3280
Or I wol dyen / also god me saue	
And she sproong / as a colt doth in the traue	
And with hir heed / sche wryed faste away	
And seyde / I wol nat kisse thee / by my fey	3284
Why lat be quod ich / lát be Nicholas	
Or I wol crie / out / harrow / and allas	
Do wey youre handes / for your curteisye	
¶ This Nicholas / gan mercy for to crye	3288
And spak so faire / and profred hire so faste	
That she hir loue / hym graunted atte laste	

And swoor hir ooth / by seint Thomas of Kent'
 That she wol been / at his comandement' 3292
 Whan þat she may / hir leyser wel espie
 Myn housbonde / is so ful of Ialousie
 That but ye wayte wel / and been priuee
 I woot right wel / I nam but deed quod she 3296
 Ye moste been ful deerne / as in this cas
 ¶ Nay ther of / care thee noght' quod Nicholas
 A clerk' hadde litherly / biset his whyle
 But if he koude / a Carpenter bigyle 3300
 And thus they been / accorded and ysworn
 To wayte a tyme / as I haue told biforn
 ¶ Whan Nicholas / had doon thus euerideel
 And thakked hire / aboute the lendes weel 3304
 He kist hire sweete / and taketh his sawtrie
 And pleyeth faste / and maketh melodie
 Thanne fil it thus / þat to the paryssh chirche
 Cristes / owene werkes / for to wirche 3308
 This goode wyf / went on an haliday
 Hir forheed shoon / as bright as any day
 So was it wasshen / whan she leet hir werk
 ¶ Now was ther of that chirche a parissĥ clerk 3312
 The which / that was ycleped Absolon
 Crul was his heer / and as the gold it shoon
 And strouted as a ffanne / large and brode
 fful streight and euene / lay his ioly shode 3316
 His rode was reed / hise eyen greye as goos
 With Powles wyndow / coruen on his shoos
 In hoses rede / he wente fetisly [leaf 40]
 Yclad he was / ful smal and proprely 3320
 Al in a kirtel / of a lyghit waget'
 fful faire and thikke / been the poyntes set'
 And ther vp on / he hadde a gay surplys
 As whit as is / the blosme vp on the rys 3324
 A myrie child he was / so god me saue
 Wel koude he laten blood / and clippe and shaue

And maken a chartre of lond / or Acquitaunce
 In twenty manere / koude he trippe and daunce 3328
 After the scole / of Oxenford[e] tho
 And with his legges / casten to and fro
 And pleyen songes / on a small Rubible
 Ther to / he song som tyme / a loud quynnyble 3332
 And as wel / koude he pleye / on his giterne
 In al the toun / nas Brewhous ne Tauerne
 That he ne visited / with his solas
 Ther any gaylard Tappestere was 3336
 But sooth to seyn / he was somdel squaymous
 Of fartyng / and of speche daungerous
 ¶ This Absolon / þat iolif was and gay
 Gooth with a Sencer / on the haliday 3340
 Sensynge the wyues / of the parisshe faste
 And many a louely look / on hem he caste
 And namely / on this Carpenteris wyf
 To loke on hire / hym thoughte a myrie lyf 3344
 She was so propre / and sweete and likerous
 I dar wel seyn / if she hadde been a Mous
 And he a Cat / he wold hire hente anon
 ¶ This parisshe clerk / this ioly Absolon 3348
 Hath in his herte / swich a loue longynge
 That of no wyf / took he noon offrynge
 ffor curteisie / he seyde he wolde noon
 The Moone / whan it was nyght / ful brighte shoon 3352
 And Absolon / his gyterne hath ytake
 ffor paramours / he thoghte for to wake
 And forth he gooth / iolif and amorous
 Til he cam / to the Carpenteres hous 3356
 A litel / after Cokkes hadde ycrowe
 And dressed hym vp / by a shotwyndowe
 That was / vp on the Carpenteris wal
 He syngeth in his voys / gentil and smal 3360
 Now deere lady / if thy wille be
 I pray yow / that ye wole thynke on me

ful wel acordaunt^t to his gyternynge
 This Carpenter awook / and herde synge 3364
 And spak vn to his wyf / and seyde anon
 What Alison / herestow nat Absolon
 That chaunteth thus / vnder oure boures wal [leaf 40, back]
 And she answerde hir housbonde / ther with al 3368
 Yis God woot Iohn / I heere it euery del
 ¶ This passeth forth / what wol ye bet than weel
 ffro day to day / to day / this ioly Absolon
 So woweth hire / that hym is wo bigon 3372
 He waketh / al the nyght / and al the day
 He kembeth hise lokkes brode / and made hym gay
 He woweth hire / by meenes / and brocage
 And swoor / he wolde been hir owene page 3376
 He syngeth brokkyng / as a nyghtyngale
 He sente hire pymen^t Meeth and spiced Ale
 And wafres / pipyng / hoot / out of the gleede
 And for she was of toune / he profreth meede 3380
 ffor som folk^t wol ben wonnen for richesse
 And somme for strokes / and somme for gentillesse ¶ vnde Ouidius /
 Ictibus Agrestis.
 ¶ Somtyme / to shewe his lightnesse and maistrye
 He pleyeth Herodes vp on a Scaffold hye 3384
 But what auailleth hym / as in this cas
 She loueth so / this hende Nicholas
 That Absolon / may blowe the bukkes horn
 He ne hadde / for his labour but a scorn 3388
 And thus / she maketh Absolon hire Ape
 And al his earnest^t turneth til a Iape
 fful sooth is this prouerbe / it is no lye
 Men seyn right thus / alwey the nye slye 3392
 Maketh / the ferre leue to be looth
 ffor though that Absolon / be wood or wrooth
 By cause / that he fer was from hire sighte
 This nye Nicholas / stood in his lighte 3396
 N Ow bere thee wel / thou hende Nicholas
 ffor Absolon / may waille and synge allas

And so bifel it on a Saterdag	
This Carpenter / was goon til Osenay	3400
And hende Nicholas and Alisoun	
Acorded been / to this conclusioun	
That Nicholas / shal shapen hym a wyle	
This sely Ialous housbonde to bigyle	3404
And if so be / the game wente aright	
She sholde slepen / in his arm al nyght	
ffor this was / his desir / and hire also	
And right anon / with-uten wordes mo	3408
This Nicholas / no lenger wolde tarie	
But dooth ful softe / vn to his chambre carie	
Bothe mete and drynke / for a day or tweye	
And to hire housbonde / bad hire for to seye	3412
If that he axed / after Nicholas	
She sholde seye / she nyste where he was	
Of al that day / she saugh hym nat with eye	[leaf 51]
She trowed / that he was in maladye	3416
ffor / for no cry / hir mayde koude hym calle	
He nolde answere / for thyng that myghte falle	
¶ This passeth forth / al thilke Saterdag	
That Nicholas / stille in his chambre lay	3420
And eet and sleepe / or dide what hym leste	
Til Sunday / that the sonne gooth to reste	
¶ This sely Carpenter / hath greet merueyle	
Of Nicholas / or what thyng myghte hym eyle	3424
And seyde / I am adrad by Seint Thomas	
It stondest nat aright with Nicholas	
God shilde / that he deyde sodeynly	
This world / is now ful tikel sikerly	3428
I saugh to day / a cors yborn to chirche	
That now / on monday last / I saugh hym wirche	
¶ Go vp quod he / vn to his knaue anoon	
Clepe at his dore / or knobbe with a stoon	3432
Looke how it is / and tel me boldely	
¶ This knaue / gooth him vp ful sturdily	

And at the chambre dore / whil that he stood
 He cride and knocked / as that he were wood 3436
 What how / what do ye maister Nicholay
 How may ye slepen / al the longe day
 ¶ But al for noght^t he herde nat a word
 An hole he foond / ful lowe vp on a bord 3440
 Ther as the Cat^t was wont In for to crepe
 And at that hole / he looked In ful depe
 And at the laste / he hadde of hym a sighte
 This Nicholas / sat capyng euere vp-righte 3444
 As he had kiked / on the newe moone
 Adoun he gooth / and tolde his maister soone
 In what array / he saugh that ilke man
 ¶ This Carpenter / to blessen hym bigan 3448
 And seyde / help vs seinte ffrydeswyde
 A man woot litel / what hym shal bityde
 This man is falle / with his Astromye
 In som woodnesse / or in som Agonye 3452
 I thoghte ay wel / how that it sholde be
 Men sholde nat knowe / of goddes pryuetee
 Ye / blessed be alwey a lewed man
 That noght^t but oonly his bileue kan 3456
 So ferde another clerk^t with Astromye
 He walked in the feeldes / for to pryde
 Vp on the sterres / what ther sholde bifalle
 Til he was / in a Marleput yfalle 3460
 He saugh nat that / but yet by seint [Thomas¹] [¹ later hand]
 Me reweth soore / of hende Nicholas
 He shal be rated / of his studiyng^t [leaf 41, back]
 If that I may / by Ihesus heuene kyng^t 3464
 ¶ Get me a staf / that I may vnderspore
 Whil þat thou Robyn / heuest of the dore
 He shal / out of his studiyng^t as I gesse
 And to the chambre dore / he gan hym dresse 3468
 His knaue / was a strong carl / for the noones
 And by the haspe / he haaf it of atones

In to the floor / the dore fil anon
 This Nicholas / sat ay as stille as stoon 3472
 And euere caped vpward in to the Eir
 This Carpenter / wende he were in despire
 And hente hym / by the sholdres myghtily
 And shook hym harde / and cride spitously 3476
 What Nicholay / what how / what looke adoun
 Awake / and thenk on Cristes passioun
 I crouche thee / from Elues / and fro wightes
 Ther-w~~ith~~ the nyghtspel / seyde he anonrightes 3480
 On foure halues / of the hous aboute
 And on the thress~~h~~fold / of the dore with-oute
 Ihesu Crist and seint Benedight
 Blesse this hous / from euery wikked wight 3484
 ffor nyghtes uerye / the white pater noster
 Where wentestow / seint Petres soster
 ¶ And atte laste / this hende Nicholas
 Gan for to sike soore / and seyde allas 3488
 Shal al this world / be lost eftsoones now?
 ¶ This Carpenter / answerde / what seystow?
 What thyнк on god / as we doon / men pat swynke
 ¶ This Nicholas answerde / fecche me drynke 3492
 And after / wol I speke in pryuetee
 Of certeyn thyng that toucheth me and thee
 I wol telle it noon oother man certeyn
 ¶ This Carpenter / goth down / and comth ageyn 3496
 And broghte / of myghty Ale a large quart
 And whan pat ech of hem / had dronke his part
 This Nicholas / his dore faste shette
 And down the Carpenter / by hym he sette 3500
 ¶ He seyde Iohn myn hoost lief and deere
 Thou shalt vp on thy trouthe swere me heere
 That to no wight thou shalt this conseil wreye
 for it is / cristes conseil that I seye 3504
 And if thou telle man / thou art forlore
 ffor this vengauce / thou shalt han therefore

That if thou wreye me / thou shalt be wood	
Nay Crist forbede it ^t for his hooly blood	3508
Quod tho this sely man / I nam no labbe	
Ne though I seye / I am nat lief to gabbe	
Sey what thou wolt / I shal it neuere telle	(leaf 42)
To child ne wyf / by hym that harwed helle	3512
N OW Iohā quod Nicholas / I wol nat lye	
I have yfounde / in myn Astrologye	
As I haue looked / in the moone bright ^t	
That now a monday next ^t at quarter nyght ^t	3516
Shal falle a reyn / and that so wilde and wood	
That half so greet ^t was neuere Noees flood	
This world he seyde / in lasse than an hour	
Shal al be dreynt / so hidous is the shour	3520
Thus schal mankynde drenche / and lese hir lyf ^t	
¶ This Carpenter answerde / allas my wyf	
And shal she drenche / allas myn Alisoun	
ffor sorwe of this / he fil almost adoun	3524
And seyde / is ther no remedie in this cas	
¶ Why yis for gode / quod hende Nicholas	
If thou wolt werken / aftir loore and reed	
Thou mayst nat werken / after thyn owene heed	3528
ffor thus seith Salomon ^d / that was ful trewe	
Werk al by conseil / and thou shalt nat rewe	
And if thou werken wolt ^t by good conseil	
I vndertake / with-outen Mast ^t and seyl	3532
Yet shal I sauen / hire / and thee / and me	
Hastow nat herd / hou saued was Noe [?]	
Whan þat oure lord / hadde warned hym biforn	
That al the world / with water sholde be lorn	3536
¶ Yis quod this Carpenter / ful yoore ago	
¶ Hastou nat herd / quod Nicholas also	
The sorwe of Noe / with his felaweshipe	
Er þat he myghte / brynge his wyf to shipe	3540
Hym hadde be leuere / I dar wel vndertake	
At thilke tyme / than alle hise wetheres blake	

That she hadde had a shipe / hir self allone And ther-fore / woostou what is best to doone	3544
This asketh haste / and of an hastif thyngt Men may nat preche / or maken tariyngt	
¶ Anon go gete vs faste in to this In A knedyngt trogh / or ellis a kymelyn	3548
ffor ech of vs / but loke þat they be large In whiche / we mowe swymme as in a barge And han ther-Inne / vitaille suffisantt	
But for a day / fy on the remenantt	3552
The water shal aslake / and goon away Aboute pryme / vp on the nexte day But Robyn / may nat wite of this / thy knaue Ne eek thy mayde Gille I may nat saue	3556
Axe nat why / for though thou aske me I wol nat tellen goddes pryuetee Suffiseth thee / but if thy wittes madde	[leaf 42, back]
To han as greet a grace / as Noe hadde	3560
Thy wyf shal I wel sauen / out of doute Go now thy wey / and speed thee heer aboute ¶ But whan thou hast for hire and thee and me Ygeten vs / thise knedyng tubbes thre	3564
Thanne shaltow hange hem / in the roof ful hye That no man / of oure purueiaunce spye And whan thou thus hast doon / as I hane seyde And hast oure vitaille / faire in hem yleyd	3568
And eek an Ax / to smyte the corde atwo Whan þat the water comth / that we may go And broke an hole / an heigh vp on the gable Vnto the gardynward / ouer the stable	3572
That we may frely / passen forth oure way Whan þat the grete shour / is goon away Thanne shal I swymme / as myrie I vndertake As dooth the white doke / after hire drake	3576
Thanne wol I clepe / how Alison / how Iohn Be myrie / for the flood wol passe anon	

And thou wolt seyn / hayl maister Nicholay
 Good morwe / I se thee wel / for it is day 3580
 And thanne / shul we be / lordes al oure lyf/
 Of al the world / as Noe and his wyf/
 ¶ But of o thyng^t I warne thee ful right^t
 Be wel auysed / on that ilke nyght^t 3584
 That we ben entred / in to shippes bord
 That noon of vs / ne speke nat a word
 Ne clepe / ne crie / but been in his preyere
 ffor it is / goddes owene heeste deere 3588
 ¶ Thy wyf and thou / moote hange fer atwynne
 ffor that^t bitwixe yow / shal be no synne
 Na moore in lookyng / than ther shal in deede,
 This ordinance is seyde / so god thee speede 3592
 Tomorwe at nyght^t whan folk ben alle aslepe
 In to our knedyng tubbes / wol we crepe
 And sitten there / abidyng goddes grace
 Go now thy wey / I haue no lenger space 3596
 To make of this / no lenger sermonyng^t
 Men seyn thus / sende the wise / and sey no thyng^t
 Thou art so wys it needeth thee nat to preche
 Go saue oure lyf / and that I the biseche 3600
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / goth forth his wey
 fful ofte / he seith allas and weylawey
 And to his wyf / he tolde his pryueetee
 And she was war / and knew it bet than he 3604
 What al this queynte cast^t was for to seye
 But nathelees / she ferde as she wolde deye
 And seyde allas / go forth thy wey anon [leaf 43]
 Help vs to scape / or we been lost echon 3608
 I am thy trewe / verray wedded wyf
 Go deere spouse / and help to saue oure lyf
LO / which a greet thyng / is Affeccioñ ¶ Auctor
 Men may dyen / of ymaginacioñ 3612
 So depe / may impressioñ be take
 This sely Carpenter / bigynneth quake

Hym thynketh verrailly / that he may see
 Noees flood / come walwyng as the see 3616
 To drenchen Alisoun / his hony deere
 He wepeth / weyleth / maketh sory cheere
 He siketh / *with* ful many a sory swogh
 He gooth / and geteth hym a knedyng trogh 3620
 And after that / a tubbe and a kymelyn
 And pryuely / he sente hem to his In
 And heng'hem / in the roof in pryuetee
 His owene hand made laddres thre 3624
 To clymben / by the ronges and the stalkes
 In to the tubbes / hangyng in the balkes
 And hem vitailleth / bothe trogh and tubbe
With breed and chese / and good Ale in a Iubbe 3628
 Suffisyng right ynogh / as for a day
 But er that he / hadde maad al this array
 He sente his knaue / and eek his wenche also
 Vp on his nede / to london for to go 3632
 And on the Monday / whan it drow to nyght
 He shette his dore / with-oute candel lyght
 And dresseth alle thyng' as it shal be
 And shortly / vp they clomben alle thre 3636
 They sitten stille / wel a furlong way
 ¶ Now Pater noster / clom seyde Nicholay
 And clom quod Iohā / and clom seyde Alisoun
 This Carpenter / seyde his deuocioun 3640
 And stille he sit / and biddeth his preyere
 Awaitynge on the reyn / if he it heere
 ¶ The dede sleepe / for wery bisynesse
 ffil on this Carpenter / right as I gesse 3644
 Aboute corfew tyme / or litel moore
 ffor trauaille of his goost' he groneth soore
 And eft he routeth / for his heed myslay
 Doun of the laddre / stalketh Nicholay 3648
 And Alisoun / ful softe adoun she spedde
 With-uten wordes mo / they goon to bedde

Ther as the Carpenter / is wont to lye
 Ther was the reuel / and the melodye 3652
 And thus [lith] Alison / and Nicholas
 In bisynesse / of myrthe and of solas
 Til that the belle of laudes gan to ryng
 And freres in the Chauncel gonne synge [leaf 43, back] 3656
This pariss̄ clerk / this Amorous Absolon
 That is for loue alwey so wo bigon
 Vp on the Monday / was at Oseneye
 With a compaignye / hym to disporte and pleye 3660
 And axed vp on cas a Cloistrer
 fful priuely / after Ioh̄n the Carpenter
 And he drough hym a part out of the chirche
 And seyde I noot I saugh hym heere nat wirche 3664
 Syn Saterday / I trow that he be went
 ffor tymber / ther our Abbot hath hym sent
 ffor he is wont for tymber for to go
 And dwellen at the grange / a day or two 3668
 Or elles / he is at his hous certeyn
 Where that he be / I kan nat soothly seyn
 ¶ This Absolon / ful ioly was and light
 And thoghte / now is tyme wake al nyght 3672
 ffor sikirly I saugh him nat stiryng
 Aboute his dore / syn day bigan to spryng
 ¶ So moot I thryue / I shal at cokkes crowe
 fful pryuely / knobbe at his wyndowe 3676
 That stant ful lowe / vp on his boures wal
 To Alison / now wol I tellen al
 My loue longynge / for yet I shal nat mysse
 That at the leste wey / I shal hire kisse 3680
 Som maner confort shal I haue parfay
 My mouth hath icched al this longe day
 That is a signe of kissing' atte leste
 Al nyght me mette eek / I was at a feeste 3684
 Therefore I wol goon slepe / an houre or tweye
 And al the nyght thanne wol I wake and pleye

- W**han that the firste cok' hath crowe anon
 Vp rist' this ioly louere Absolon 3688
 And hym arraieth / gay at poynt deuys
 But first' he cheweth greyn of lycorys
 To smellen sweete / er he hadde kembd his heer
 Vnder his tonge / a trewe loue he beer 3692
 ffor ther-by / wende he to ben gracious
 He rometh / to the Carpenteres hous
 And stille he stant' vnder the shot wyndowe
 Vn to his brist it raughte / it was so lowe 3696
 And softe he knocketh / with a semy soun
 What do ye hony comb / sweete Alisoun
 My faire bryd / my sweete cynamome
 Awaketh lemman myn / and speketh to me 3700
 Wel litel thynken ye / vp on my wo
 That for youre loue / I swete ther I go
 No wonder is / thogh that I swelte and swete [leaf 44]
 I moorne / as dooth a lamb after the tete 3704
 Ywis lemman / I haue swich loue longynge
 That lik a turtel trewe / is my moornynge
 I may nat ete / na moore than a mayde
 ¶ Go fro the wyndow / Iakke fool she sayde 3708
 As help me god / it wol nat be com pa me
 I loue another / and elles I were to blame
 Wel bet than thee / by Ihesu Absolon
 Go forth thy wey / or I wol caste a ston 3712
 And lat me slepe / a twenty deuel wey
 ¶ Allas quod Absolon / and weylawey
 That trewe loue / was euere so yuel biset
 Thanne kys me / syn it may be no bet 3716
 ffor Ihesus loue / and for the loue of me
 ¶ Wiltow thanne / go thy wey quod she?
 ¶ Ye certes lemman / quod this Absolon
 ¶ Thanne make thee redy quod she I come anon 3720
 And vn to Nicholas / she seyde stille
 Now hust' and thou shalt laughen al thy fille
 ¶ This Absolon / down sette hym on his knees

And seyde / I am lord at alle degrees	3724
ffor after this / I hope ther cometh moore	
Lemman thy grace / and sweete bryd thyn oore	
¶ The wyndow / she vndoth / and that in haste	
Hauē do quod she / com of and speed the faste	3728
Lest that oure Neighebores / thee espie	
¶ This Absolon / gan wype his mouth ful drie	
Dirk was the nyght ^t as pich / or as the cole	
And at the wyndow / out she pitte hir hole	3732
And Absolon / hym fil no bet ne wers	
But <i>with</i> his mouth / he kiste hir naked ers	
fful sauourly / er he was war of this	
¶ Abak he stirte / and thoughte it was amys	3736
ffor wel he wiste / a womman hath no berd	
He felte a thyng al rough / and long yherd	
And seyde / fy allas what hauē I do	
¶ Tehee quod she / and clapte the wyndow to	3740
And Absolon / gooth forth a sory pas	
¶ A berd a berd / quod hende Nicholas	
By goddes corpus / this goth faire and weel	
¶ This sely Absolon / herde euery deel	3744
And on his lippe / he gan for Anger byte	
And to hym self / he seyde I shal thee quyte	
¶ Who rubbeth now / who froteth now his lippes	
<i>With</i> dust ^t <i>with</i> sond / <i>with</i> straw / <i>with</i> clooth / <i>with</i> chippes	
But Absolon / that seith ful ofte allas	3749
My soule / bitake I vn to Sathanas	
But me were leuere / than al this toun quod he	[leaf 44, back]
Of this despit ^t awroken for to be	3752
Allas quod he / allas I ne hadde ybleynt	
His hote loue / was coold and al yqueynt ^t	
ffor fro that tyme / that he hadde kiste hir ers	
Of <i>paramours</i> / he sette nat a kers	3756
ffor he was / heeled of his maladie	
fful ofte / <i>paramours</i> he gan defie	
And weepe / as dooth a child that is ybete	
A softe paas / he wente ouer the strete	3760

- Vn til a smyth / men cleped daun Gerueys
 That in his forge / smythed plough harneys
 He sharpeth shaar / and kultour bisily
 This Absolon / knokketh al esily 3764
 And seyde / vndo Gerueys / and that anon
 ¶ What who artow s I am heere Absolon
 What Absolon / for Cristes swete tree
 Why rise ye so rathe / ey benedicitee 3768
 What eyleth yow / som gay gerl god it woot
 Hath broght yow thus / vp on the viritoot
 By seinte note / ye woot wel what I mene
 ¶ This Absolon / ne roghte nat a bene 3772
 Of al his pley / no word agayn he yaf
 He hadde / moore tow / on his distaf
 Than Gerueys knew / and seyde freend so deere
 That hooete kultour / in the chymenee heere 3776
 As lene it me / I haue ther-with to doone
 And I wol / brynge it thee / agayn ful soone
 ¶ Gerueys answerde / certes were it gold
 Or in a poke / nobles alle vntold 3780
 Thou sholdest have / as I am trewe smyth
 Ey cristes foo / what wol ye do ther-with s
 ¶ Ther of quod Absolon / be as be may
 I shal wel telle it thee / to morwe day 3784
 And caughte the kultour / by the colde stele
 fful softe / out at the dore he gan to stele
 And wente / vn to the Carpenteris wal
 He cogheth first / and knokketh ther with al 3788
 Vp on the wyndowe / right as he dide er
 ¶ This Alison answerde / Who is ther s
 That knokketh so / I warante it a theef
 ¶ Why nay quod he / god woot my sweete leef 3792
 I am thyn Absolon / my deerelyng
 Of gold quod he / I haue thee broght a ryng
 My mooder yaf it me / so god me saue
 fful fyn it is / and ther-to wel ygraue 3796

This wol I yeue thee / if thou me kisse	
¶ This Nicholas / was risen for to pisse	
And thoughte / he wolde amenden al the Iape	[leaf 45]
He sholde kisse his [ers] er that he scape	3800
And vp the wyndowe / dide he hastily	
And out his ers / he putteth pryuely	
Ouer the buttoke / to the haunche bon	
And ther with / spak this clerk' this Absolon	3804
Spek sweete bryd / I noot nat where thou art'	
¶ This Nicholas / anon leet fle a fart/	
As greet' as it had been a thonder dent	
That with the strook' he was almoost yblent	3808
And he was redy / with his Iren hoot'	
And Nicholas / amydde ers he smoot'	
¶ Of gooth the skyn / an hande brede aboute	
The hoothe kultour / brende so his toute	3812
And for the smert' he wende for to dye	
As he were wood / for wo he gan to crye	
Help / water / water / help for goddes herte	
¶ This Carpenter / out of his slomber sterte	3816
And herde oon crien water / as he were wood	
And thoughte / Allas / now comth Nowelis flood	
He sit hym vp / with-uten wordes mo	
And with his Ax / he smoot the corde atwo	3820
And doun gooth al / he foond neither to selle	
Ne breed ne Ale / til he cam to the Celle	
Vp on the floor / and ther aswowne he lay	
¶ Vp stirte hire / Alison and Nicholay	3824
And criden / out' and harrow in the strete	
The neighebores / bothe smale and grete	
In ronnen / for to gauren on this man	
'That yet aswowne he lay / bothe pale and wan	3828
ffor with the fal / he brosten hadde his Arm	
But stonde he moste / vn to his owene harm	
ffor whan he spak / he was anon bore doun	
With hende Nicholas / and Alisoun	3832

They tolden euery man / that he was wood
 He was agast so / of Nowelis flood
 Thurgh fantasie / that of his vanytee
 He hadde ybought hym / knedyng tubbes thre 3836
 And hadde hem hanged / in the roue aboue
 And þat he preyde hem / for goddes loue
 To sitten in the roof / þar compaignye
 ¶ The folk gan laughen / at his fantasie 3840
 In to the roof / they kiken and they cape
 And turned al his harm / vn to a Iape
 ffor / what so / þat this Carpenter answerde
 It was for noght no man his reson herde 3844
 With othes grete / he was so sworn adoun
 That he was holde wood in al the toun
 ffor euery clerk / anonright / heeld with oother [leaf 45, back]
 They seyde / the man was wood / my leeu broother 3848
 And euery wight / gan laughen of this stryf/
 Thus / swyued was / this Carpenteris wyf/
 ffor al his kepyng and his Ialousye
 And Absolon / hath kist hir nether eye 3852
 And Nicholas / is scalded in the towte
 This tale is doon / and god saue al the rowte
 ¶ Heere endeth the Millere his tale

[Slight break in the MS.]

¶ The prologe / of the Reues tale

WHAN folk hadde laughen / at this nyce cas
 Of Absolon / and hende Nicholas 3856
 Diuerse folk / diuersely they seyde
 But^t for the moore part^t they loughe and pleyde
 Ne at this tale / I saugh no man hym greue
 But it were oonly / Osewold^t the Reue 3860
 By-cause / he was / of Carpenteris craft^t
 A litel Ire / in his herte ylaft^t
 He gan to grucche / and blamed it a lite
 ¶ So theek / quod he / ful wel koude I yow quite 3864
 With bleryng^t of a proud Milleres eye
 If that me liste / speke of ribaudye
 But ik am oold / me list no pley for Age
 Gras tyme is doon / my fodder is now forage 3868
 This white tope / writeth myne olde yeris
 Myn herte is mowled also as myne heris
 But if I fare / as dooth an Openers
 ¶ That ilke fruyt. / is euer leng the wers 3872
 Til it be roten / in Mullok^t or in stree
 We olde men / I drede so fare we
 Til we be roten / kan we nat be rype
 We hoppen ay / whil that the world wol pype 3876
 ffor in oure wyl / ther stiketh euere a nayl
 To haue an hoor heed / and a grene tayl
 As hath a leek / for thogh oure myght be goon
 Oure wyl / desireth folie euere in oon 3880
 ffor whan we may nat doon / than wol we speke
 Yet in oure Asshen olde / is fyr yreke
 ¶ ffoure gleedes han we / whiche I shal deuyse
 Avauntyng^t liyng^t Anger / Coueitise 3884
 Thise foure sparkles / longen vn to eelde
 Oure olde lemes / mowe wel been vnweelde

But wyl ne shal nat failen / that is sooth	[leaf 46]
And yet' ik haue alwey a Coltes tooth	3888
As many a yeer / as it is passed henne	
Syn that my tappe of lif / bigan to renne	
ffor sikerly / whan I was bore / anon	
Deeth drough the tappe of lyf / and leet' it gon	3892
And euer sithe / hath so the tappe yronne	
Til that almost' al empty is the tonne	
The stream of lyf / now droppeth on the chymbe	
The sely tonge / may wel rynge and chymbe	3896
Of wrecchednesse / that passed is ful yoore	
With olde folk' saue dotage is namoore	
W han thatoure hoost / hadde herd this sermonyng'	
He gan to speke / as lordly as a kyng'	3900
He seide / what amounteth al this wit'	
What' shul we speke alday of hooly writ'	
The deuel / made a Reue for to preche	
And of a Soutere / Shipman or a leche	3904
Sey forth thy tale / and tarie nat the tyme	
Lo Depefeld' / and it is half wey pryme	
Lo Grenewych' / ther many a shrewe is Inne	
It were al tyme / thy tale to bigynne	3908
N ow sires / quod this Osewold' the Reue	
I pray yow alle / that ye nat yow greue	
Thogh I answeere / and somdeel sette his howue	
ffor leueful is / with force S force of showue ¶ vim vi repellere	
¶ This dronke Millere hath ytoold vs heer	3913
How that' bigyled was a Carpenter	
Perauenture in scorn / for I am oon	
And by youre leue / I shal him quite anoon	3916
Right in his cherles termes wol I speke	
I pray to god / his nekke mote breke	
He kan wel / in myn eye seen a stalke	
But in his owene / he kan nat seen a balke	3920

¶ Heere bigynneth the Reues tale

AT Trumpyngtoñ / nat fer fro Cantebrigge
 Ther gooth a brook / and ouer that a brigge
 Vp on the which[e] brook / ther stant a Melle
 And this is verray sooth / þat I yow telle *[painting of
the Reue]*
 A Millere / was ther dwellynge many a day 3925
 As eny peok' he was proud and gay
 Pipen he koude and fisshe / and nettes beete
 And turne coppes / and wel wrastle and sheete 3928
 And by his belt' he baar a long panade
 And of a swerd / ful trenchant was the blade
 A ioly poppere / baar he in his pouche *[leaf 46, back]*
 Ther was no man / for peril / dorste hym touche 3932
 A Sheffield thwitel / baar he in his hose
 Round was his face / and camuse was his nose
 As piled as an Ape / was his skulle
 He was a Market' betere atte fulle 3936
 Ther dorste no wight / hand vp on hym legge
 That he ne swoor / he sholde anon abegge
 A theef he was / of corn and eek of Mele
 And that a sly / and vsaunt for to stele 3940
 His name was hoote / deynous Symkyn
 A wyf he hadde / ycomen of noble kyn
 The person of the toun / hir fader was
 With hire he yaf / ful many a panne of bras 3944
 ffor that Symkyn / sholde in his blood allye
 She was yfostred in a Nonnerye
 ffor Symkyn / wolde no wyf / as he sayde
 But if she were / wel ynorissed and a mayde 3948
 To sauen his estaat of yomanrye
 And she was proud / and peert' as is a pye
 A ful fair sighte / was it vp on hem two
 On haly dayes / biforn hire wolde he go 3952

With his typet / [y]bounde about his heed
 And she cam after / in a gyte of reed
 And Symkyn / hadde hosen of the same
 Ther dorste no wight / clepen hire but dame 3956
 Was noon so hardy / that wente by the weye
 That with hire / dorste rage / or ones pleye
 But if / he wolde be slayn of Symkyn
 With panade / or with knyf / or boidekyn 3960
 ffor Ialous folk / ben perilous eueremo
 Algate / they wolde hire wyues wenden so
 And eek / for she was somdel smoterlich
 She was as digne / as water in a dich 3964
 As ful of hoker / and of bismare
 Hir thoughte / þat a lady sholde hire spare
 What for hire kynrede / and hir nortelrie
 That she hadde lerned in the Nonnerie 3968
 ¶ A doghter hadde they bitwixe hem two
 Of twenty yeer / with-uten any mo
 Sauynge a child / þat was of half yeer age
 In Cradel it lay / and was a propre page 3972
 This wenche thikke / and wel ygrowen was
 With kamuse nose / and eyen greye as glas
 Buttokes brode / and brestes rounde and hye
 But right fair was hire heer / I wol nat lye 3976
 ¶ This person of the toun / for she was feir
 In purpos was / to maken hire his heir
 Bothe of his catel / and his Mesuage (leaf 47)
 And straunge / he made it of hir mariage 3980
 His purpos was / for to bistowe hire hye
 In to som worthy blood of Auncetrye
 ffor hooly chirches good / moot been despended
 On hooly chirches blood / that is descended 3984
 Therefore / he wolde his hooly blood honoure
 Though / that he hooly chirche sholde deuoure
 Gret sokene / hath this Millere / out of doute
 G With whete and Malt of al the land aboute 3988

And nameliche / ther was a greet Colledge
 Men clepen the Soler halle at Cantebregge
 Ther was hir whete / and eek hir malt ygrounde
 And on a day / it happed in a stounde 3992
 Sik lay the Maunciple / on a maladye
 Men wenden wisly / that he sholde dye
 ffor which / this Millere / stal bothe mele and corn
 An hundred tyme / moore than biforn 3996
 ffor ther biforn / he stal but curteisly
 But now / he was a theef outrageously
 ffor which / the wardeyn chidde and made fare
 But ther of / sette the Millere nat a tare 4000
 He craketh boost / and swear it was nat so
 ¶ Thanne were ther / yonge poure clerkes two
 That dwelten in this halle / of which I seye
 Testif they were / and lusty for to pleye 4004
 And oonly / for hire myrthe and reurye
 Vp on the wardeyn / bisily they crye
 To yeue hem leue / but a litel stounde
 To goon to Mille / and seen hir corn ygrounde 4008
 And hardily / they dorste leye hir nekke
 The Millere shold nat stele hem / half a pekke
 Of corn by sleighte / ne by force hem reue
 And at the laste / the wardeyn yaf hem leue 4012
 Iohñ highte that oon / and Aleyn heet that oother
 Of o toun were they born / that highte Strother
 ffer in the North / I kan nat telle where
 ¶ This Aleyn / maketh redy al his gere 4016
 And on an hors / the sak' he caste anon
 fforth goth Aleyn the clerk / and also Iohñ
 With good swerd' / and bokeler by hir side
 Iohñ knew the wey / hem neded no gyde 4020
 And at the Mille / the sak adoun he layth
 Aleyn spak first / al hayl Symond' yfayth
 Hou fares thy faire doghter / and thy wyf'
 ¶ Aleyn welcome quod Symkyn / by my lyf' 4024

And Iohn also / how now / what do ye heer
 ¶ Symond^ȝ quod Iohⁿ / by god nede has na peer
 Hym boes serue hym selne / that has na swayn [leaf 47, back]
 Or elles / he is a fool / as clerkes sayn 4028
 Oure Manciple / I hope / he wil be deed
 Swa werkes ay / the wanges in his heed
 And forthy / is I come / and eek Alayn
 To grynde oure corn / and carie it ham agayn 4032
 I pray yow / spede vs heythen that ye may
 ¶ It shal be doon / quod Symkyn by my fay
 What wol ye doon / whil that it is in hande
 ¶ By God / right by the hopur wil I stande 4036
 Quod Iohⁿ / and se / how that the corn gas In
 Yet saugh I neuere / by my fader kyn
 How that the hopur / waggis til and fra
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / Iohⁿ wiltow swa 4040
 Thanne wil I be bynethe / by my croun
 And se / how þat the Mele falles down
 In to the trough / that sal be my disport
 ffor Iohⁿ yfaith / I may been of youre sort 4044
 I is / as ille a Millere / as are ye
 ¶ This Millere / smyled of hir nycetee
 And thoghte / al this nys doon / but for a wyle
 They wene / þat no man may hem bigile 4048
 But by my thrift / yet shal I blere hir eye
 ffor al the sleigh^te / in hir Philosophye
 The moore queynte crekes / that they make
 The moore wol I stele / whan I take 4052
 In stide of flour / yet wol I yeue hem bren
 The gretteste clerkes / been noghit wisest men
 As whilom to the wolf / thus spak the Mare
 Of al hir Art [ne] counte I noght a tare 4056
 ¶ Out at the dore / he gooth ful pryuely
 Whan þat he saugh / his tyme softly
 He looketh vp and doun / til he hath founde
 The clerkes hors / ther as it stood ybounde 4060

Bihynde the Mille / vnder a lefsel
 And to the hors / he goth hym faire and wel
 He strepeth of the brydel / right anon
 And whan the hors was laus / he gynneth gon 4064
 Toward the fen / ther wilde Mares renne
 forth with wehee / thurgh thikke *and* thurgh thenne
 ¶ This Millere gooth agayn / no word he seyde
 But dooth his note / and with the clerkes pleyde 4068
 Til that hir corn / was faire and weel ygrounde
 And whan the Mele / is sakked and ybounde
 This Iohā goth out and fynt his hors away
 And gan to crie / harrow and weylaway 4072
 Oure hors is lorn / Alayn for goddes banes
 Stepe on thy feet com out man al atanes
 Allas / our wardeyn / has his palfrey lorn [leaf 48]
 This Aleyn al forgat / bothe Mele and corn 4076
 Al was out of his mynde / his housbondrie
 What whilk way is he geen / he gan to crie
 ¶ The wyf cam lepynge Inward with a ren
 She seyde allas / youre hors goth to the fen 4080
 With wilde mares / as faste as he may go
 Vnthank come on his hand / that boond hym so
 And he þat better / sholde han knyht the reyne
 ¶ Allas quod Aleyn / for cristes peyne 4084
 Lay doun thy swerd / and I wil myn alswa
 I is ful wight god waat as is a raa
 By god[des] herte / he sal nat scape vs bathe
 Why nadstow pit the Capul in the lathe 4088
 Ihayl / by god Aleyn / thou is a fonne
 ¶ This sely clerkes / han ful faste yronne
 To-ward the fen / bothe Aleyn and eek Iohā
 ¶ And whan the Millere / saugh þat they were gon 4092
 He half a bussiel / of hir flour hath take
 And bad his wyf / go knede it in [a] cake
 He seyde / I trowe the clerkes were aferd
 Yet kan a Millere / make a clerkes berd 4096

ffor al his Art' now lat hem goon hir weye
 Lo wher they goon / ye lat the children pleye
 They gete hym nat so lightly / by my croun
 ¶ These sely clerkes / rennen vp and doun 4100
 With keepe / keepe / stand' / stand' / Iossa warderere
 Ga whistle thou / and I shal kepe hym heere
 But' shortly / til that it was verray nyght'
 They koude nat / though they do al hir myght' 4104
 Hir capul cacche / he ran alwey so faste
 Til in a dych / they caughte hym atte laste
Wery and weet' as beest is in the reyn
 Comth sely Iohn' / and with him comth Aleyn 4108
 Allas quod Iohn' / the day that I was born
 Now are we dryue / til hethyng' and til scorn
 Oure corn is stohn / me wil vs fooles calle
 Bathe the wardeyn / and oure felawes alle 4112
 And namely / the Millere weylaway
 ¶ Thus pleyneth Iohn' / as he gooth by the way
 Toward the Mille / and bayard in his hond'
 The Millere / sittynge / by the fyr he fond' 4116
 ffor it was nyght' and forther myghte they noght'
 But for the loue of god / they hym bisoght'
 Of herberwe and of ese / as for hir peny
 ¶ The Millere seyde agayn / if ther be eny 4120
 Swich as it is / yet shal ye haue youre part/
 Myn hous is streit' but ye han lerned Art'
 Ye konne by Argumentz / make a place [leaf 48, back]
 A myle brood / of twenty foot of space 4124
 Lat se now / if this place may suffice
 Or make it rowm with speche / as in youre gise
Now Symond' / seyde Iohn' / by scint Cutberd'
 Ay is thou myrie / and this is faire answerd' 4128
 I haue herd seyde / man sal taa / of twa thynges
 Slyk as he fyndes / or taa slyk as he brynges
 But specially / I pray thee hoost deere
 Get vs som mete and drynke / and make vs cheere 4132

And we wil payen / trewely atte fulle
 With empty hand / men may none haukes tulle
 Loo heere our siluer / redy for to spende
 ¶ This Millere / in to toun his doghter sende 4136
 ffor Ale and breed / and rosted hem a goos
 And boond hire hors / it sholde nat goon loos
 And in his owene chambre / hem made a bed
 With sheetes and with chalons / faire yspred 4140
 Noght from his owene bed / ten foot / or twelue
 His doghter hadde a bed / al by hir selue
 Right in the same chambre / by and by
 It myghte be no bet and cause why ? 4144
 Ther was no rommer herberwe in the place
 They soupen / and they speke hem to solace
 And drynke euere / strong ale atte beste
 Aboute mydnyght wente they to reste 4148
 ¶ Wel hath this Millere vernysshed his heed
 fful pale he was for-dronken / and nat reed
 He yexeth / and he speketh / thurgh the nose
 As he were / on the quakke / or on the pose 4152
 To bedde he goth / and with hym goth his wyf
 As any Iay / she light was and Iolyf
 So was hir ioly whistle wel y-wet
 The Cradel / at hir beddes feet is set 4156
 To rokken / and to yeue the child to sowke
 And whan þat dronken / al was in the crowke
 To bedde / went the doghter right anon
 To bedde wente Aleyn / and also Iohn 4160
 Ther nas na moore / hem neded no dwale
 This Millere / hath so wisely bibbed Ale
 That as an hors / he snorteth in his sleepe
 Ne of his tayl bihynde / he took no keepe 4164
 His wyf bar him a burdon a ful strong
 Men myghte hir rowtyng heere two furlong
 The wenche rowteth eek / par compaignye
 ¶ Aleyn the clerk / that herd this melodye 4168

- He poked Iohñ / and seyde slepestow
 Herdtow euere slyk / a sang er now
 Lo whilk a cowplyng' is ymel hem alle [leaf 49]
 A wilde fyr / vp on thair bodyes falle 4172
 Wha herkned euere / slyk a ferly thyng'
 Ye they sal haue / the flour of il endyng'
 This lange nyghit / ther tydes me na reste
 But yet nafors / al sal be for the beste 4176
 ffor Iohñ seyde he / als euere moot I thryue
 If þat I may / yon wenche wil I swyue
 Som esement' has lawe yshapen vs
 ffor Iohñ / ther is a lawe / that says thus 4180
 That gif a man / in a point' be ygreued
 That in another / he sal be releued
 Oure corn is stoln / shortly is ne nay
 And we han had / an il fit al this day 4184
 And syn I sal haue neen amendement'
 Agayn my los / I wil haue esement'
 By God sale / it sal neen other bee
 ¶ This Iohñ answerde / Alayn auyse thee 4188
 The Millere / is a perilous man he seyde
 And gif that he / out of his sleepe abreyde
 He myghite doon vs / bathe a vileynye
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / I count hym nat a flye 4192
 And vp he rist / and by the wenche he crepte
 This wenche lay vprighte / and faste slepte
 Til he so ny was / er she myghite espie
 That it had been / to late for to crie 4196
 And shortly for to seyn / they were aton
 Now pley Aleyn / for I wol speke of Iohñ
This Iohñ lith stille / a furlong wey or two
And to hym self / he maketh routhe and wo 4200
 Allas quod he / this is a wikked Iape
 Now may I seyn / that I is but an Ape
 Yet has my felawe / som what for his harm
 He has / the Milleris doghter / in his Arm 4204

He aunted hym / and has his nedes sped
 And I lye / as a draf sek / in my bed
 And when this Iape is tald another day
 I sal been halde a daf a cokenay 4208
 I wil arise / and aunte it by my fayth
 Vnhardy is vnseely / thus men sayth
 And vp he roos / and softely he wente
 Vn to the cradel / and in his hand it hente 4212
 And baar it softe / vn to the beddes feet
 ¶ Soone after this / the wyf hir rowtyng leet
 And gan awake / and wente hire out to pisse
 And cam agayn / and gan hir cradel mysse 4216
 And groped heer and ther / but she foond noon
 Allas quod she / I hadde almost mysgoon
 I hadde almost goon / to the clerkes bed [leaf 49, back]
 Ey benedicite / thanne hadde I foule y-sped 4220
 And forth she gooth / til she the Cradel fond
 She gropeth / alwey forther with hir hond
 And foond the bed / and thoghte noght but good
 By cause / that the Cradel by it stood 4224
 And nyste wher she was / for it was derk
 But faire and wel / she creepe In to the clerk
 And lith ful stille / and wolde han caught a sleepe
 With-Inne a while / this Iohn the clerk vp leepe 4228
 And on this goode wyf / he leith on soore
 So myrie a fit hadde she nat ful yoore
 He priketh harde and soore / as he were mad
 This ioly lyf / han thise two clerkes lad 4232
 Til that the thridde cok / bigan to synge
 ¶ Aleyn wax wery / in the dawenyng
 ffor he had swonken / al the longe nyght
 And seyde / fare weel Malyne sweete wight 4236
 The day is come / I may no lenger byde
 But eueremo / wher so I go / or ryde
 I is thyn awen clerk swa haue I seel
 ¶ Now deere lemman quod she / go fareweel 4240

But er thow go / o thyng' I wol thee telle
 Whan that thou wendest' homward by the Melle
 Right at the entree / of the dore bihynde
 Thou shalt a Cake / of half a bussiel fynde 4244
 That was ymaked / of thyn owene mele
 Which that I heelpe / my fader for to stele
 And goode lemman / god thee saue and kepe
 And with that word / almoost she gan to wepe 4248
A leyn vp rist / and thoughte / er þat it dawe
 I wol go crepen In / by my felawe
 And fond the Cradel / with his hand anon
 By God thoughte he / al wrang I haue mysгон 4252
 Myn heed is toty / of my swynk to nyght
 That maketh me / that I go nat aright
 I woot wel by the Cradel / I have mysго
 Heere lith the Millere / and his wyf also 4256
 And forth he goth / a twenty deuel way
 Vn to the bed / ther as the Millere lay
 He wende have copen / by his felawe Iohñ
 And by the Millere In he creepe anon 4260
 And caughte hym by the nekke / and softe he spak'
 He seyde / thou Iohñ / thou swynesheed awak
 ffor cristes saule / and heer a noble game
 ffor by that lord / that called is seint Iame 4264
 As I haue thries / in this shorte nyght/
 Swyued the Milleres doghter bolt vpright'
 Whil thow hast' as a Coward been agast [leaf 50]
 ¶ Ye false harlot' quod the Millere hast' 4268
 A false traitour / false clerk / quod he
 Thow shalt be deed / by goddes dignitee
 Who dorste be so boold / to disparage
 My doghter / that is come / of swich lynage 4272
 And by the throte bolle / he caughte Alayn
 And he hente hym / despitously agayn
 And on the nose / he smoot' hym with his fest'
 Doun ran the bloody stream / vp on his brest' 4276

And in the floor / with nose and mouth to-broke
 They walwe / as doon two pigges in a poke
 And vp they goon / and doun agayn anon
 Til that the Millere / sporned at a stoon 4280
 And doun he fil / bakward vp on his wyf/
 That wiste no thyng / of this nyce stryf/
 ffor she was falle aslepe a lite wigh̄t
 With Ioh̄n the clerk / that waked hadde al nygh̄t 4284
 And with the fal / out of hir sleepe she breyde
 Help hooly croys of Bromholm / she seyde
 In manus tuas / lord to thee I calle
 Awak Symond̄ / the feend is on vs falle 4288
 Myn herte is broken / help I nam but deed
 Ther lyth oon / vp on my wombe / and on myn heed
 Helpe Symkyn / for the false clerkes figh̄t
 ¶ This Ioh̄n stirte vp / as soone as euer he mygh̄t 4292
 And graspeth by the walles to and fro
 To fynde a staf / and she stirte vp also
 And knewe the Estres / bet than dide this Ioh̄n
 And by the wal / a staf she foond anon 4296
 And saugh / a litel shymeryng of a light̄
 ffor at an hole / In shoon the moone bright̄
 And by that light̄ she saugh hem bothe two
 But sikerly / she nyste / who was who 4300
 But as she saugh / a whit thyng in hir eye
 And whan she gan / the white thyng espye
 She wende the clerk hadde wered a volupeer
 And with the staf / she drough ay neer and neer 4304
 And wende han hit this Aleyn at the fulle
 And smoot the Millere / on the pyled skulle
 And doun he gooth / and cride harrow I dye
 Thise clerkes beete hym weel / and lete hym lye 4308
 And greythen hem / and tooke hir hors anon
 And eek hire mele / and on hir wey they gon
 And at the Mille / yet they tooke hir cake
 Of half a buss̄hel flour / ful wel ybake 4312

Thus is the proude Millere wel ybete
 And hath ylost / the gryndynge of the whete
 And payed for the soper euerideel [leaf 50, back]
 Of Aleyn and of Ioñin / þat bette hym weel 4316
 His wyf is swyued / and his doghter als
 Lo swich it is / a Millere to be fals
 And therefore this prouerbe / is seyð ful sooth
 Hym thar nat wene wel / that yuele dooth 4320
 A gylour / shal hym self bigyled be
 And god / þat sitteth heighe in Trinitee
 Saue al this compaignye / grete and smale
 Thus have I quyð the Millere in my tale 4324
 ¶ Heere is ended the Reues tale

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

¶ The prologe of the Cokes Tale

The Cook of Londoñ / whil that the Reue spak
 ffor ioye him thoughte / he clawed him on the bak'
 Ha. ha. quod he / for cristes passion)
 This Millere / hadde a sharpe conclusion) 4328
 Vpon his argument / of herbergage
 Wel seyde Salomon / in his langage
 Ne brynge nat every man in-to thyn hous
 ffor herberwyng by nyghte is perilous 4332
 Wel oghte a man / auysed for to be
 Whom that he broghte / in-to his pryuetee
 I pray to god / so yeue me sorwe and care
 If euere sitthe / I highte Hogge of Ware 4336
 Herde I a Millere / bettre yset a werk
 He hadde a Iape of malice in the derk
 But god forbede / that we stynte heere^{hic}
 And therefore / if ye vouche-sauf to heere^{audire} 4340
 A tale of me / that am a poure man
 I wol yow telle / as wel as euere I kan
 A litel iape / that fil in oure Citee
 ¶ Oure hoost answerde / and seide I graunte it thee 4344
 Now telle on Roger / looke that it be good
 ffor many a pastee / hastow laten blood
 And many a Iakke of Douere hastow soold
 That hath been / twies hoot and twies coold 4348
 Of many a pilgrym / hastow cristes curs
 ffor of thy percely / yet they fare the wors
 That they han eten / with thy stubbel goos
 ffor in thy shoppe / is many a flye loos 4352
 Now telle on / gentil Roger by thy name
 But yet I pray thee / be nat wroth for game
 A man may seye ful sooth / in game and pley [leaf 51]
 ¶ Thou seist ful sooth / quod Roger by my fey 4356

But sooth pley quaad pley / as the flemyng seith
 And ther-fore / Herry Bailly / by thy feith
 Be thou na[t] wrooth / er we departen heer
 Though that my tale / be of an Hostileer 4360
 But nathelees / I wol nat telle it yit
 But er we parte / ywis thou shalt be quit/
 And ther with al / he lough and made cheere
 And seyde his tale / as ye shul after heere 4364

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

¶ Heere bigynneth the Cookes tale

- A** Prentys whilom dwelled / in oure Citee
 And of a craft of vitailliers was hee
 Gaillard he was / as Goldfynch in the shawe
 Broun as a berye / a propre short fel[a]we 4368
 With lokkes blake / ykempd ful fetisly
 Dauncen he koude / so wel and iolily *[painting of the Cook]*
 That he was cleped Perkyn Reuelour
 He was / as ful of loue and paramour 4372
 As is the hyve / ful of hony sweete
 Wel was the wenche / with hym myghite meete
 At euery bridale / wolde he synge and hoppe
 He loved bet' the Tauerne than the shoppe 4376
 ¶ ffor / whan ther / any ridyng was in Chepe
 Out of the shoppe / thider wolde he lepe
 Til that he hadde / al the sighte yseyn
 And daunced wel / he wolde nat come ayeyn 4380
 And gadered hym / a meynee of his sort'
 To hoppe and synge / and maken swich disport'
 And ther / they setten steuene for to meete
 To pleyen / at the dys in swich a streete 4384
 ffor in the toun / nas ther no prentys
 That fairer koude caste / a paire of dys
 Than Perkyn koude / and ther-to he was free
 Of his dispense / in place of pryuetee 4388
 That fond his maister wel in his chaffare
 ffor often tyme / he foond his box ful bare
 ffor sikerly / a prentys Reuelour
 That haunteth dys / Riot' or paramour 4392
 His maister / shal it in his shoppe aby
 Al haue he / no part of the Mynstralcy
 ffor thefte and Riot'. they been conuertible
 Al konne he pleye on gyterne / or Ribible 4396

Reuel and trouthe / as in a lowe degree [leaf 51, back]
 They been ful wrothe al day / as men may see
 ¶ This ioly prentys / with his maister bood
 Til he were ny / out of his prentishood 4400
 Al were he snybbed / bothe erly and late
 And somtyme / lad with reuel to Newegate
 But atte laste / his maister hym bithoghte
 Vp on a day / whan he his papir soghte 4404
 Of a prouerbe / that seith this same word
 Wel bet is roten Appul / out of hoord
 Than þat / it rotie al the remenaunt'
 ¶ So fareth it' by a riotous seruauzt' 4408
 It is wel lasse harm / to lete hym pace
 Than he shende / alle the seruantz in the place
 Therefore / his maister / yaf hym Acquittance
 And bad hym go / with sorwe and with meschance 4412
 And thus this ioly prentys / hadde his leue
 Now lat hym riote al the nyght / or leue
 And for ther is no thief / with-oute a lowke
 That helpeth hym / to wasten and to sowke 4416
 Of that he brybe kan / or borwe may
 Anon he sente his bed / and his array
 Vn to a compier / of his owene [sort¹] [1 later hand]
 That louede dys / and Reuel and disport' 4420
 And hadde a wyf / that heeld for contenance
 A shoppe / and swyued for hir sustenance

[22 lines & 1 leaf of the MS blank.]

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.

[THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

[*Spurious Link.*]

But here of I wil passe as now [leaf 56, back, foot]
 And of 3ong Gamelyne I wil telle 3ow 2

[*Tale.*]

THe tale of 3ong Gamelyn [leaf 57]
 ithen *and* listenyth *and* herkenyth a right 1
 And 3e shul here of a doughti knyght
 Sire Iohā of Bondys was his name
He coude of norture and of mochel game 4
 Thre sones the knyght had *and* with his body hem wan
 The eldest was a moche schrew *and* sone he bi-gan
 His bretheren loued wel here fader *and* of him were a-gast
 The eldest disserued his fader curs *and* h had hit at last 8
 The gode knyght his fader lyued so 3ore
 That deth was comyn him to *and* handlid him ful sore
 The good knyght cared sore sike þer he lay
 How his children shuld lyuen after his day 12
 He had ben wide where but non husbonde he was
 Al the londe that he hadde hit was purchas
 ffayn he wold it were dressed among hem alle
 That eche of hem hadd his part as it myght falle 16
 Tho sente he in to contre after wyse knyghtes
 To helpen delen his londes *and* dressen hem to rightes
 He sent hem word by *lettres* þai shuld hye blyue
 3if thei wold speke with him while he was on lyue 20

Tho þe knyghtes herden syke þat he lay
 Had þei no rest nother nyght no day
 Til þei come to him þer he lay stille
 On his deef bed to a-bide goddes wille 24
 Then seide þe good knyght sike þer he lay
 Lordes I 3ow warne for soth with-oute nay
 I may no lenger lyuen here in this stonde
 ffor thorough goddes wille deth drawes me to grounde 28
 Ther nas none of hem alle þat herd hem a right
 That thei hadden reuthe of þat ilke knyght
 And seiden sire for goddes loue ne dismay 3ow nought
 God may done bote of bale þat is now I-wroght 32
 Than spake þe gode knyght sike þer he lay
 Bot of bale god may send I wot it is no nay
 But I byseke 3ow knyghtes for the loue of me
 Goth and dresseth my londes among my sones thre 36
 And for the loue of god de-lith not hem amys
 And for3etep not Gamelyn my 3ong sone þat is
 Takip hide to that one as wel as to that other
 Seeld 3e seen any heier helpen his brother 40
 Tho leten þei the knyght lyen þat was not in hele [leaf 57, back]
 And wenten in to conseil his londis for to dele
 ffor to delem hem alle to oon that was her þoght
 And for Gamelyn was 3ongest he shuld haue noght 44
 Alle the lond þat ther was þei dalten it in two
 And leten Gamelyn þe 3ong with-uten lond go
 And eche of hem seide to oþer ful lowde
 His breþrin might 3eue him lond when he good cowde 48
 When thei hadde deled the lond at her wille
 Thei comen to þe knyght þer he lay stille
 And told him a-noon how thei had wroght
 And the knyght ther he lay likid it right noght 52
 Than saide the knyght by seynt martyn
 ffor al þat 3e haue don 3et is þe lond myn
 ffor goddes loue Neighbourous stonidith alle stil
 And I wil delen my lond right after my wil 56

*

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Iohn my eldest sone shal haue plowes fyue
 That was my fadres heritage while he was on lyue
 And my myddlest sone fyue plowes of lond
 That I halpe for to gete wit my right hond 60
 And alle myn oþer purchas of londes *and* ledes
 þat I be-quethe Gamelyn *and* alle my gode stedes
 And I be-seke ʒow good men þat law con of lond
 ffor Gamelyns loue þat my quest stond 64
 Thus dalt þe knyght his lond by his day
 Right on his deeth bed sike þer he lay
 And sone afterward he lei stoon stille
 And died whan tyme come as it was cristes wille 68
 A-none as he was dede *and* vnder gras grave
 Sone þe elder brother giled the ʒong knave
 He toke in to his honde his lond *and* his lede
 And Gamelyn him selue to clothen *and* to fede 72
 He clothed him *and* fedde hym yuel *and* eke wrothe
 And lete his londes for-fare *and* his houses bothe
 His parkes *and* his wodes *and* dide no thing welle
 And sithen he it a-bowght on his owne felle 76
 So long was Gamelyn in his brothres halle
 ffor þe strengest of good wille þei douteden him alle
 Ther was none ther-in noþer ʒong ne old
 That wold wrath Gamelyn were he neuer so bold 80
 Gamelyn stood on a day in his brotheris ʒerd
 And bi-gan with his hand to hondel his berd
 He þought on his landes þat lay vnsawe (leaf 58)
 And his faire okes þat doune were I-drawe 84
 His parkes were broken and his dere reved
 Of alle his good stedes noon was him by-leued
 His howses were vnhiled and ful yuel dight
 Thoo þouʒt Gamelyn it went not a-right 88
 Afterward came his brother walking there
 And seide to gamelyn is oure mete ʒare
 Tho wrathed him Gamelyn *and* swore by goddes booke
 Thow shalt go bake thi self I wil not be thi cooke 92

Now proper Gamelyn how answerist þow now
 Thou spakest neuer suche a word as þow dost now
 By my feith seide Gamelyn now me thinkith nede
 Of alle þe harmes þat I haue I toke neuer 3et hede 96
 My parkes ben broken and my dere by-reved
 Of myn armes *and* my stedes noght is me byleued
 Al þat my fader me bi-quaþ al goth to shame
 And þer-fore haue þou goddes curs brother by thyn name 100
 Than spake his brother þat rape was of rees
 Stand stille gadling and hold þi pees
 þou shalt be fayn to haue þi mete *and* þi wede
 What spekest þou gadling of lond or of lede 104
 þan seide Gamelyn þe child þat 3yng
 Cristes curs mote he haue þat clepith me gadling
 I am no worse gadlyng ne no worse wight
 But borne of a lady *and* geten of a knyght 108
 Ne dorst he note to Gamelin neuer a fote go
 But clepid to him his men *and* seide to hem tho
 Goth *and* betith this boy *and* reueth him his witte
 And lete him lerne an other to answeere me bette 112
 Then saide þe child 3ong Gamelyn
 Cristes curs mote þou haue brother art þou myn
 And 3if I shal algate be beten a-noon
 Cristes curs mote þou haue but þou be that oon 116
 And anoñ his brother in þat grete hete
 Made his men to fette staffes Gamelyn to bete
 When euery of hem hadd a staff I-nomen
 Gamelyn was war þoo he seigh hem comen 120
 Tho Gamelyn sighe hem comen he loked ouer aft
 And was warre of a pestel stood vnder þe walle
 Gamelyn was light and þider con he lepe
 And droff alle his brothers men right sone on hepe [115, bk]
 And lokid as a wild lyon. *and* laide on gode wone
 Tho his brother sei þat he by-gan to gone
 He fleý vp in to a loft *and* shete þe dore faste
 This Gamelyn with his pestel mad hem al a-gast 128

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Some for gamelyns loue and some for eye
 Alle thei drowhen hem to halues þoo he gan to pleye
 What now seide Gamelyn euel mote 3e thee
 Wil 3e bi-gynne contik and so sone flee 132
 Gamelyn soght his broþer whider he was flow
 And sauhe where he lokid oute at a wyndowe
 Brother said Gamelyn come a litel nere
 And I wil teche the a play at the bokelere 136
 His brother hym answerid and seid by seint Richere
 While þat pestel is in thi hond I wil come no nere
 Brother I wil make thi pees I swere by cristes ore
 Cast a-way þe pestel and wrathe the nomore 140
 I moste nede saide Gamelyn wrath me at ones
 ffor þou wold make þi men to breke my bones
 Ne hadde I hadde mayn and might in myn armes
 To haue hem fro me thei wold haue do me harmes 144
 Gamelyn saide his brother be þou not wrothe
 ffor to seen the haue harme me were right lothe
 I ne did it noght broþer but for a fondyng
 ffor to loken or þou art strong and art so 3yng 148
 Come a-doune then to me and graunt me my bone
 Of a thing I wil the axe and we shul saught sone
 Down þan come his broþer that fykel was and felle
 And was swith sore a-ferd of þe pesteff 152
 He saide brother Gamelyn axe me þi bone
 And loke þou me blame but I it graunt sone
 Than saide Gamelyn brother I was
 And we shul be at one þou most graunt me this 156
 Alle þat my fadir me by-quaþ while þat he was on lyue
 Thou most do me it haue 3if we shul not stryve
 þat shat þou haue Gamelyn I swere by cristes ore
 Aft þat þi fader þe bi-quath þough þou woldest haue more
 Thi lond that lith leie wel it shal be sowe
 And thyn houses reised vp þat ben leide ful lowe
 Thus saide the knyght to Gamelyn with mouth
 And þought on falsenes as he wel couthe 164

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

The knyght þought on treson and Gamelyn on none (leaf 59)
 And went and kissed his brother *and* when þei were at one
 Alas 3ong Gamelyn no thing he ne wiste
 With suche false treson his brother him kyste 168
 Lynthenyth and lysteneth *and* holdith 3oure tong
 And 3e shul here talkyng of Gamelyn the 3ong
 Ther was ther be siden cried a wrastelynge
 And ther fore ther was sett a Ram and a Rynge 172
 And Gamelyn was in wille to wende þerto
 ffor to preuen his might what he coude do
 Brother seide Gamelyn be seint Richere
 Thou most lene me to nyght a litel cursere 176
 That is fressh to þe spores on for to ride
 I most on an Erand a litel here be side
 Be god saide his brother of stedes in my stalle
 Go and chese the þe best spare non of hem alle 180
 Of stedes and of cursers that stoden hem be side
 And telle me good brother whider þou wilt ride
 Here be side brother is cried a wrastlynge
 And þer fore shal be sette a ram and a rynge 184
 Moche worship it were brother to vs alle
 Might I þe ram *and* þe rynge bryngen home to þis halle
 A stede þer was sadeled smertly and skete
 Gamelyn dide a paire of spores faste on his fete 188
 He sette his fote in þe stirop the stede he by-strod
 And toward þe wrastlynge the yong child rood
 Tho Gamelyn þe yonge was riden oute at gate
 The fals knyght his brother loked yit after pate 192
 And bi-sought ihesu crist that is heuen kyng
 He mighte breke his nekke in that wrastlynge
 As sone as Gamelyn comē ther the place was
 He light doun of his stede and stode on the gras 196
 And ther he herde a frankelen weylaway syng
 And bi-gan bitterly his handes for to wrynge
 Gode man seide Gamelyn whi makest þou þis fare
 Is ther no man that may 3ow helpen out of care 200

Allas seide þis frankelēyn that euer was I bore
 ffor twei stalworth sones I wene that I haue lore
 A Champion is in þe place þat hath wrought me sorowe
 ffor he hath slayn my two sones but 3if god hem borwe
 I wol 3eue ten pound by ihesu crist and more 205
 With þe nones þat I fond a man to handle hym sore [1r 59, bk]
 Gode man seide Gamelyn wilt þou wel done
 Hold myn hors while my man drawith of my shone 208
 And helpe my man to kepe my clothes *and* my stede
 And I wil in to þe place gone to loke 3if I may spede
 By god seide þe frankelēyn it shal be done
 I wil my self be thi man to draw of thi shone 212
 And wende þou in to place ihesu criste the spede
 And drede not of thi clothes ne of þi gode stede
 Barfoot and vngirt Gamely In came
 Alle þat were in þe place hede of him þei name 216
 How he durste aunte him to done his myght
 þat was so doughti a champion in wrastling *and* in fight
 Vp sterte þe Champion rapely a-none
 Toward 3ong Gamelyn he by-gan to gone 220
 And seide who is þi fader *and* who is þi sire
 ffor sothe þou art a grete fool þat þou come here
 Gamelyn answerid þe Champion tho
 Thou knew wel my fader while he couthe go 224
 Whiles he was on lyue by seint Martyn
 Sire Iehan of Boundis was his name *and* I gamelyn
 ffelaw seide þe Champion so mote I thyue
 I knew wel þi fader whiles he was on lyue 228
 And thi self gemelyn I wil þat þou it here
 While þou were a 3ong boy a moche schrew þou were
 Than seide Gamelyn *and* swore by cristes ore
 Now I am older wax þou shalt fynde me a more 232
 By god seide þe Champion wel come mote þou be
 Come þou ones in my hond þou shalt neuer the
 It was wel with-Inne the nyght *and* the mone shone
 When Gamelyn and the Champion to-gedre gon gone 236

The Champion cast tornes to gamelyn þat was prest
 And gamelyn stode and bade him done his best
 Than seide Gamelyn to þe Champion
 Thou art fast aboute to bryng me a-doun 240
 Now I haue proued mony tornes of thyne
 Thou most he seide proue on or two of myne
 Gamelyn to þe Champion 3ede smertely a-none
 Of alle the tornes þat he couthe he shewid him but one
 And kest him on the lift side þat þe ribbes he brake 245
 And þerto his one arme þat 3af a grete crak'
 Than seide gamelyn smertly a-none [leaf 60]
 Shal it be hold for a cast or elles for none 248
 By god seide þe Champion wheþer it be
 He þat cometh ones in thi honde shal he neuer the
 þan seide þe frankeleyn þat hadd his sones there
 Blessed be þou Gamelyn þat euer þou bore were 252
 The frankeleyn seide to þe Champion on hym stood hym no
 This is 3ong Gamelyn þat taght þe this pleie [eye
 A-3en vnswared þ^e Champion þat liked no þing wel
 He is altther maister *and* his pleie is right felle 256
 Sithen I wrastelet first it is gone 3ore
 But I was neuer in my lif^e handeled so sore
 Gamelyn stode in þe place anon with-out serke
 And seid 3if þer ben mo lete hem come to werke 260
 The Champion þat payned hym to wirke sore
 Hit semyth bi his continance þat he wil no more
 Gamelyn in þe place stood stille as stoon
 ffor to a-byde wrastlinge but þer come none 264
 Ther was noon with gamelyn þat wold wrastle more
 ffor he handlid þe Champion so wonderly sore
 Two gentil men 3emed þe place
 Come to Gamelyn god 3yue him gode grace 268
 And seide to him do on thi hosen *and* þi shone
 ffor sothe at þis tyme þis faire is done
 And þan seide Gamelyn so mote I wel fare
 I haue not 3et haluendel sold my ware 272

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Tho seide the Champion so brok I my swere
 He is a fool þat ther-of bieth þou sellest it so dere
 Thoo seide the frankelēyn þat was in moche care
 ffelaw he seid whi lakkest þou þis ware 276
 By seynt Iame in Galys þat mony man hath soght
 3it is it to good chepe that þou hast bought
 Tho þat wardeyns were of þat wrastlinge
 Come and brought Gamelyn þe Ramme *and* þe rynge 280
 [.

 *no gap in the MS.*]
 And went with moche ioye home in þe mornynge 284
 His brother seie wher he came with þe grete route
 And bade shit þe gate *and* hold hym with-oute
 The porter of his lord was sore a-gaste
 And sterte anon to þe gate *and* lokkid it faste 288
 Now litheþ *and* listenythe boþe 3ong *and* old
 And 3e shul here gamyn of Gamelyn þe bold
 Gamelyn come ther-to for to haue comyn In [leaf 60, back]
 Than was it shet fast with a pyn 292
 Than seide Gamelyn Porter vndo þe 3ate
 ffor gode mannys sore stonde þer ate
 Than answerid þe porter and sware by goddes berd
 Thou ne shalt Gamelyn come in to þis 3erde 296
 Thou lixt seid Gamelyn so broke I my chyue
 He smote the wiket with his foote *and* brake away the pyne
 The porter sey tho it might ne better be
 He sette foote on erthe and by-gan to flee 300
 By my fai seide gamelyn þat trauaile is lore
 ffor I am on foote as light as þou haddest it swore
 Gamelyn ouer toke þe porter *and* his tene wrake
 And girt him in the nekke þat þe boon to-brake 304
 And toke him by þat on arme *and* threw him in a welle
 Vij^c. fadame it was depe as I haue herd telle
 Whan Gamelyn þe 3ong þus had plaied his plaie
 Alle þat in þe 3erde were drowen hem a-waye 308

þei dreden him ful sore for werke þat he wroghte
 And for þe faire companye þat he þider broghte
 Gamelyn 3ede to þe 3ate *and* lete it vp wide
 He lete In alle þat gon wold or ride 312
 And seide 3e be welcome with-out any greue
 ffor we wil be maisters here *and* axe no man leue
 3esterday I left seide 3ong Gamelyn
 In my brother seler fyue tonn wyne 316
 I wil not þis companye parten on twyne
 And 3e wil don after me while sope is þer-Ine
 And 3if my brother grucche or make foule chere
 Other for spence of mete *and* drynk' þat we spend here
 I am oure Catour *and* bere oure Alther purse 321
 He shal haue for his grucching seint marie curse
 My broþer is a nygon I swere by cristes ore
 And we wil spende largely þat he hath spared 3ore 324
 And who þat make grucching þat we here dwelle
 He shal to þe porter in to þe draw welle
 Vij. dayes *and* vij nyght Gamelyn held his fest
 With moche solace was there *and* none chest 328
 In a litel torret his brother ley steke
 And sey hem wast his gode *and* dorst not speke
 Erly in a mornyng on the viij. day
 The gestes come to Gamelyn *and* wold gon her' way 332
 Lordes seide Gamelyn wil 3e so hye [leaf 61]
 Aþ þe wyn is not 3et dronke so browke I myn eie
 Gamelyn in his hert was ful woo
 When his gestes toke her leue fro him forto go 336
 He wold þe had dwelled lenger *and* þei saide nay
 But by-taught gamelyn god *and* goode day
 Thus made Gamelyn his fest *and* broght it wel to end
 And after his gestes toke leue to wende 340
 Litheþ and listenyth *and* holdith 3oure tong
 And 3e shul here Gamen of Gamelyn þe 3ong
 Herkenyth lordinges and listeneþ a right
 When alle gestes were gon how Gamelyn was dight 344

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Alle the while þat Gamelyn held his mangerie
 His brother þought on him be wreke with his trecherie
 Tho Gamelyns gestes were riden and goone
 Gamelyn stode anone allone frend hadde he none 348
 Tho after felle sone with-In a litul stonde
 Gamelyn was taken *and* ful hard I.-bonde
 fforth come the false knyght out of þe solere
 To gamelyn his brother he 3ede ful nere 352
 And saide to gamelyn who made the so bolde
 ffor to stroien my store of my housholde
 Brother seide Gamelyn wrath the right noght
 ffor it is mony day gone sith it was boght 356
 ffor brother þou hast hade by seint Richere
 Of xv. plowes of lond þis sixtene 3ere
 And of alle þe bestes þou hast forþ bredde
 þat my fader me by-quaþ on his deþ bedde 360
 Of alle þis sixtene 3ere I 3eue the þe prove
 ffor the mete and the drinke þat we haue spended now
 Than saide þe false knyght euyll mote he the
 Herken brother Gamelyn what I wil 3eue the 364
 ffor of my body brother heire geten haue I none
 I wil make þe myn eyer I swere by seint Iohan
 Parfay seide gamelyn and it so be
 And þou þinkest as þu seist god 3eld it the 368
 No thing wist Gamelyn of his brother gile
 Ther fore he him by-giled in a litul while
 Gamelyn seid he oo þing I the telle
 Tho þou threw my porter in the draw wellle 372
 I swore in þat wrath and in þat grete moote
 That þou shuldest be bonde both hond and foote [leaf 61, back]
 [.
 376
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 ffor to holden myn a-vow as I the by-hoote
 Brother seide Gamelyn as mote I the
 þou shalt not be for-swore for þe loue of me 380

Tho maden thei Gamelyn to sitte myght not stonde
 Til þei hadd him bond& boþe foote and honde
 The fals knyght his brother of Gamelyn was a-gast
 And sent after feteres to feteren him fast 384
 His brother made lesinges on him þere he stode
 And told hem þat comen In þat Gamelyn was wood
 Gamelyn stood to a post bonden in þe halle
 Tho þat comen In loked on him alle 388
 Euere stode gamelyn euen vp right
 But mete ne drinke had he none noþer day ne nyght
 Than saide gamelyn brother by myn hals
 Now I haue aspied þou art a parti fals 392
 Hadde I wiste þe treson þat þou hast I-fond
 I wolde haue 3eue strokes or I had be bond
 Gamelyn stode bond stille as any stone
 Two daies and two nyghtes mete hadde he none 396
 Than saide gamelyn þat stod I.-bond strong
 Adam spenser me þinkeþ I fast to long
 Adam spencer now I beseche the
 ffor the moche loue my fader loued the 400
 3if þou may come to the keys lose me out of bond
 And I wil parte with the of my fre lond
 þen saide adam þat was þe spencer
 I haue serued thi brother þis xvj. 3ere 404
 3if I lete the gon out of his beure
 He wold say after-ward I were a traitour
 Adam seide Gamelyn so browke I myn hals
 Thou shal fynd my brother atte þe last fals 408
 Ther-fore brother Adam lose me out of bondes
 And I. wil parte with þe of my fre landes
 Vp suche forward seid Adam I-wis
 I wil do þerto alle þat in me is 412
 Adam seide Gamelyn as mote I the
 I wil holde þe couenaunt and þou wil me
 A-none as Adame lord to bed was gone
 Adam toke þe keys and lete gamelyn out a-none 416

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

He vnlokked gamelyn both hondes and feete
 In hope of auauncement þat he him by-hete [leaf 62]
 Than saide Gamelyn þanked be goddes sonde
 Now I am lose bothe fote and honde 420
 Hadde I now eten *and* dronken aright
 Ther is none in this hous shuld bynde me þis nyght
 Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as any stone
 And lad him into spence raply a-none 424
 And sette him to soþer right in a priue stede
 He bade him do gladly and Adam so dede
 Anon as Gamelyn hadde eten wel and fyne
 And þerto I-dronken wel of þe red wyne 428
 Adam seid Gamelyn what is now þi rede
 Or I go to my brother and gird of his hede
 Gamelyn seide Adam it shal not be so
 I con teche þe a rede þat is worth þe two 432
 I wote wel for sothe þat is no nay
 We shul haue a mangerie right on sonday
 Abbotes and prioures mony here shal be
 And oþer men of holy chirche as I telle [þe] 436
 þou shalt stond vp by the post as þou were hond fast
 And I schal leue hem vn-loke þat away þou may hem cast
 Whan þat þei haue eten *and* wasshen her hondes
 þow shalt beseke hem alle to bring þe out of bondes 440
 And 3if þei wil borow the þat were gode game
 þan were þu out of prison and I oute of blame
 And yf eche of hem say to vs nay And if eche
 I shal do an other I swere bi þis day 444
 Thow shalt haue a gode staf *and* I wil haue anoþer
 And cristes curs haue þat oon þat faileþ þat oþer
 3e for god seide Gamelyn I sei it for me
 If I faile on my syde yuel mote I the 448
 3if we shul algate assoile hem of her synne
 Warne me brother Adam whan we schul by-gynn
 Gamelyn said Adam by seint charite
 I wil warne the by-forne whan it shal be 452

When I wynke on the loke for to gone
 And cast away þi ffetres *and* come to me anone
 Adam saide Gamelyn blessid be thi bones
 þat is a good conseil zeuen for þe nones 456
 3if þei werne me to bring out of bondes
 I wil sette good strokes right on her lendes
 Tho þe sonday was comen *and* folke to þe feste [leaf 62, back]
 ffaire þei were wel-comed both lest *and* meste 460
 And euere as þei at halle dore come Inne
 Thei cast here ey3e on 3ong Gamelyne
 The fals knyght his broþer ful of trechery
 Alle þe gestes þat þere were at þe mangery 464
 Of Gamelyn his brother he told hem with mouthe
 Alle þe harme and þe shame þat he telle couthe
 Tho þei were I-serued of messes two or thre
 Than seide Gamelyn how serue 3e me 468
 It is noght wel serued by god þat aff made
 þat I sitte fasting and oþer men make glade
 The fals knyght his brother þer as he stode
 Tolde alle gestes þat Gamelyn was woode 472
 And Gamelyn stode stille and answarid noght
 But Adams wordes he held in his thoght
 Tho Gamelyn gan speke deolfulli with alle
 To þe grete lordes þat saten in þe halle 476
 Lordes he seide for cristes passion
 Helpe to bring Gamelyn out of prison
 Than saide an Abbot sorow on his cheke
 He shal haue cristes curs *and* seint maries eke 480
 þat þe out of pryson beggeþ or borwe
 But euer worth him wel þat doth the moche sorwe
 After þat Abbot þan spake anoþer
 I wold þyn heed were of þoghe þou were my broþer 484
 Alle þat þe borwe foul mote hem falle
 Thus þei saide alle þat were in the halle
 Than saide a Priour euel mote he preue
 It is grete sorw *and* care boy þou art on lyue 488

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Ow seid Gamelyn so browke I my bone
 Now I haue spied þat frendes haue I none
 Cursed mote he worth both flesshe *and* blood
 þat euer doþ priour or Abbot any good 492
 Adam þe spencer toke vp þe clothe
 And loked on Gamelyn and say þat he was wrothe
 Adam on the pantrie litul he þoght
 But two gode staues to halle dore he broght 496
 Adam loked on Gamelyn and he was war anone
 And cast away the fetres *and* bi-gan to gone
 Tho he cam to Adam he toke þe on staf
 And by-gan to worche and good strokes 3af [leaf 63] 500
 Gamelyn come in to þe halle and the spencer bothe
 And lokid hem a-boute as þei hadde ben wrothe
 Gamelyn spreynyþ holi water *with* an Oken spire
 That some that stod vp right fel in þe fire 504
 þer was no lewed man þat in þe halle stooode
 That wold do Gamelyn any thing but goode
 But stoden by siden *and* lete hem bothe wirche
 ffor þei hadde ne reweth of men of holy chirche 508
 Abbot or priour Monk' or chanoun
 That Gamelyn ouertoke anone þei 3eden down
 Ther was none of alle þat with his staf mette
 þat he made hem ouer throw *and* quite hem his dette 512
 Gamelyn said Adam for seint charite
 Pay gode lyueray for þe loue of me
 And I wil kepe þe dore so euer here I masse
 Er þai ben assoiled þer shal none passe 516
 Doute the noght seide Gamelyn while we ben in fere
 Kepe wel þe dore and I wil wirche here
 Bi-stere þe gode Adam and let þer non fle
 And we shul telle largeli how mony þat þer be 520
 Gamelyn saide Adam do hem but goode
 Thei ben men of holi chirche draw of hem no blood
 Saue wel þe crowne *and* do hem no harmes
 But breke bothe her legges *and* sithen her armes 524

Thus Gamelyn and Adam wrought right fast
 And plaide with the monkes *and* made hem agast
 Thider þei come riding Ioly with swaynes
 And home a-zeyn þei were lad in cartes *and* waynes 528
 Tho þei hadden alle I-doo þen seide a gray frere
 Alas sire Abbot what did we now here
 Tho þat we comen hider it was a cold reede
 Vs hadde ben better at home with water *and* with brede 532
 While Gamelyn made ordres of monkes *and* frere
 Euer stode his brother *and* made foul chere
 Gamelyn vp with his staff þat he wel knew
 And girt him in þe nek' þat he ouer threw 536
 A litil a-boue þe gyrdel þe rigge bon to-brast
 And sette him in þe fetres þer he sat arst
 Sitte þer brother seide Gamelyn
 ffor to colen þi body as I did myn. 540
 As sucche as þei hadden wroken hem on her foon [leaf 63, back]
 Thei askid water and wasshen a-none
 What some for here loue *and* somme for her awe
 Alle þe seruauntes seruet hem of the beste lawe 544
 The sherreue was þenne but fyue myle
 And alle was told him in a litil while
 How gamelyn and Adam haden doñ a sory res
 Bounden and wounden men a-zens the kynges pees 548
 Tho by-gan sone strif for to wake
 And the sherrif aboute Gamelyn forto take
 Now litheþ and listeneþ so god zeue þow good fyne
 And ze shul here gode game of zong Gamelyn 552
 ffoure and twenti zong men þat helden hem ful bold
 Come to þe shirreue and seide þat þei wolde
 Gamelyn and Adam fette by here fay
 The shirreue zeue hem leue soth for to say 556
 Thei hyeden fast wold þei not lynne
 Til þei come to þe gate þer Gamelyn was Inne
 Thei knokkeden on þe gate þe porter was nyghe
 And loked out at an hole as man that was slighe 560

The porter hadde be-hold hem a litil while
 He loued wel Gamelyn *and* was drad of gile
 And let þe wyket stond ful stille
 And asked hem with oute what was here wille 564
 ffor alle þe grete companye þan spake but one
 Vndo þe gate porter *and* lete vs in gone
 Than saide þe porter so brouke I my chyn
 3e shul saye 3oure erant er 3e come Ine 568
 Say to Gamelyn and Adam 3if þeire wil be
 We wil speke with hem two wordes or thre
 ffelaw saide þe porter stande þer stille
 And I wend to Gamelyn to wyte his wille 572
 In went þe porter to gamelyn a-none
 And saide sire I warne 3ow here be comen 3oure foon
 The shirreues men ben atte þe gate
 ffor to take 3ow both shul 3e not scape 576
 Porter seid Gamelyn so mote I wel the
 I wil allowe þe þi wordes when I my tyme see
 Go a-geyn to þe gate *and* dwelle with hem a while
 And þou shalt se right sone porter a gile 580
 Adam seide Gamelyn loke þe to gone
 We haue foo men atte gate *and* frendes neuer one [leaf 64]
 Hit ben þe Shirreues men þat hider ben comen
 Thei be swore to-geder þat we shal be nome 584
 Gamelyn said Adam hye the right blyue
 And if I faile the þis day euel mote I thryue
 And we shul so wel-come þe Shirreues men
 That some of hem shal make her beddes in þe fen 588
 At a posterne gate Gamelyn out went
 And a good Cartstaf in his hond hent
 Adam hente sone an other grete staf
 ffor to helpen Gamelyn *and* good strokes 3af 592
 Adam fel tweyne *and* Gamelyn fel thre
 The other sette feete on erth *and* by-gan to flee
 What saide Adam so euer here I masse
 I haue right good wyn drynke or 3e passe 596

Nay by god seide þei þi drinke is not goode
 It wold make mannes brayn to lien in his hoode
 Gamelyn stood stille and lokid him a-boute
 And saide þe shirreue cometh with a grete route 600
 Adam seide Gamelyn what ben now þi redes
 Here cometh þe sherreue *and* wil haue oure hedes
 Adam seide to Gamelyn myn rede is now þis
 A-bide we no lenger lest we fare amys 604
 I rede þat we to wood gone or þat we be fonde
 Better is þer louse þan in towne be bounde
 Adam toke bi the hond ʒong gamelyn
 And euery of hem drank a draught of wyn 608
 And after token her cours *and* wenten her way
 Tho fond þe sherreue nyst but none eye
 The sherreue light doune *and* wente in to halle
 And fond þe lord fetred fast with alle 612
 The shirreue vnfetered him right sone anone
 And sent after a leche to hele his rigge bone
 Late we now þe fals knyght lie in his care
 And take we of Gamelyn *and* loke how he fare 616
 Gamelyn in to þe wood stalkid stille
 And Adam spencer liked right ille
 Adam swore to Gamelyn by seint Richere
 Now I see it is mery to be a spencer 620
 That leuer me were keys to bere
 Than walken in þis wild woode my clothes to tere
 Adam seide Gamelyn dismay þe right nocht [leaf 64, back]
 Mony good mannys child in care is broght 624
 As thei stod talkyng bothen in fiere
 Adam herd talking of men *and* nyghe him þought þei were
 Tho Gamelyn vnder wood lokid a-right
 Seuē score of ʒong men he se wel I-dight 628
 Alle sate at þe mete compas aboute
 Adam seide Gamelyn now haue I no doute
 After bale cometh bote þorgh goddes might
 Me thinke of mete and drinke y haue a sight 632

Adam loke tho vnder wode bough
 And tho he say mete and he was glad I-nough
 ffor he hoped to god to haue his dele
 And he was sore alonged after a gode mele 636
 As he saide þat word þe maister outlawe
 Sawgh Adam and Gamelyn vnder wode shawe
 3onge men saide þe maister bi þe gode rode
 I am war of gestes god send vs gode 640
 Yonde ben two yonge men wel I-dight
 And *parauenture* ther ben more who so loked aright
 Ariseth vp yong men *and* fette hem to me
 It is good þat we witten what men thei be 644
 Vp þer sterten seuene fro þe dyner
 And metten wiþ *gamelyn and* Adam spencer
 Whan thei were nighe hem þan seide þat one
 Yeldeth vp 3onge men 3oure bowes and 3oure flone 648
 Than saide Gamelyn that 3onge was of elde
 Moche sorowe mote þei haue þat to 3ow hem 3elde
 I course none other but right my selue
 Thei 3e fette to 3ow fyue þan be 3e twelue 652
 þo þei herde by his word that might was in his arme
 Ther was none of hem þat wolde don hem harme
 But seide to Gamelyn myldely and stille
 Come a-fore oure maistre and sai to him þi wille 656
 3onge men saide Gamelyn bi 3oure lewte
 What man is 3our maister that 3e with be
 Alle þe answerde with-oute lesinge
 Oure maister is crowned of outlawes kynge 660
 Adam seide Gamelyn go we in cristes name
 He may neither mete ne drinke werne vs for shame
 3if þat he be hende and come of gentil blood
 He wil 3eue vs mete and drinke *and* do vs some good [1f 65]
 Be seint Iame saide Adam what harme þat I gete 665
 I wil auenture me þat I hadde mete
 Gamelyn and Adam went forth in fere
 And þei grette þe maister that þei fonde þere 668

Than saide þe maister kynge of owtlawes
 What seke 3e 3onge men vnder wode shawes
 Gamelyn answerde þe kynge with his crowne
 He moste nedes walke in felde þat may not walke in towne
 Sire we walke not here none harne to do 673
 But 3if we mete a dere to shete þerto
 As men that ben hungry and mow no mete fynde
 And ben hard be-stad vnder wode lynde 676
 Of Gamelyn wordes þe maister hadde rewthe
 And seide 3e shal haue y-nowe haue god my treuthe
 He bad hem sitte down for to take reste
 And bad hem ete and drinke *and* þat of þe beste 680
 As þei eten *and* dronken wel and fyne
 Than saide on to an other this is gamelyn
 Tho was þe maister outlawe in to conseil nome
 And tolde how it was gamelyn that thider was come 684
 Anone as he herde how it was be-falle
 He made him maister vndir him ouer hem alle
 With-in þe thridde wike him come tydyng
 To þe maister outlawe that was here kynge 688
 That he shulde come home his pees was made
 And of þat gode tydyng he was ful gladde
 Tho saide he to his 3onge men soth forto telle
 Me ben comen tydynges I may no lenger dwelle 692
 Tho was Gamelyn anone with-oute tarienge
 Made maister outlawe and crowned her kynge
 Tho was Gamelyn crowned kynge of outlawes
 And walkid a while vnder wode shawes 696
 The fals knyght his broþer was shereue and sire
 And lete his brother endite for hate and for hire
 Tho were his bonde men 3ory *and* no thinge glad
 When Gamelyn her lorde wolfes hede was cried *and* made
 And sent oute of his men where þei might him fynde 701
 ffor to go seke Gamelyn vnder wode lynde
 To telle him tydyng the wynde was went
 And alle his good reued *and* alle his men shent 704

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

Whan þei hadden him founden on knees þei hem setten [1r 65, bk1]
 And a-doun with her hode and here lorde gretten
 Sire wrathe 3owe nocht for þe gode rode
 ffor we han brought 3ow tydyngge but þei be not goode 708
 Now is þi brother sherreue *and* hap þe baillie
 And hath endited þe and wolfes hede doth þe crie
 Allas seide Gamelyn þat euer I was so slak
 That I ne hadde broke his nekke þo I his rigge brak 712
 Goth greteth wel myn housbondes and wife
 I wil be at the next shire haue god my lyfe
 Gamelyn came redy to þe next shire
 And ther was his brother both lorde *and* sire 716
 Gamelyn boldeliche came in to þe mote halle
 And putte adoun his hood amonge þe lordes alle
 God saue 3ow lordinges þat here be
 But broke bak' sherreue euel mote thu the 720
 Whi hast thou do me þat shame *and* velonye
 ffor to lete endite me *and* wolfeshede do me crie
 Tho thought the fals knyght for to ben a-wreke
 And lete Gamelyn most he no thinge speke 724
 Might þer be no grace but Gamelyn at þe laste
 Was caste in prison and fetered faste
 Gamelyn hath a brother that hight sire Ote
 As gode a knyght and hende as might gon on foote 728
 Anone 3ede a messagere to that gode knyght
 And tolde him al to-gidre how Gamelyn was dight
 [. no gap in the MS.]
 He was right sory was he no þing light 732
 And lete saddle a stede and þe way he name
 And to his twei breþerne right sone he came
 Sire saide sir Ote to the sherreue tho
 We ben but thre bretheren shul we neuer be mo 736
 And þou hast prisoned þe beste of vs alle
 Suche a nother brother euel mote him be-falle
 Sire ote saide þe fals knyght lat be þi cours
 By god for thi wordes he shal fare the wors 740

To þe kynges prisone he is I-nome
 And ther he shal a-bide til þe Iustice come
 Parde saide sir Ote better it shal be
 I bid hym to mainprys þat þou graunte me 744
 Til þe next sitting of deliuerance
 And late þan Gamelyn stond to his chaunce
 Brother in suche a forward I take him to the [leaf 66]
 And by þi fadres soule þat þe bygat *and* me 748
 But he be redy whan þe Iustice sitte
 Thou shalt bere þe Iugement for al þi grete witte
 I graunt wel saide sir Ote þat it so be
 Late delyuer hym anone *and* take him to me 752
 Tho was Gamelin delyuered to sir Ote his brother
 And þat nyght dwelled þe oon with þe tother
 On the morwen saide Gamelyn to sir Ote þe hynde
 Brother he saide I mote for soth fro 3ow wynde 756
 To loke how my 3onge men leden her lif
 Whether þei lyuen in Ioy or elles in strif
 By god seide sir Ote þat is a cold rede
 Now I see þat alle þe Carke schal falle on my hede 760
 ffor whan þe Iustice sitte *and* þou be not I-fonde
 I shal anone be take *and* in þi stede I-bonde
 Brother saide Gamelyn dismaie þe nyght
 ffor by seint Iame in Galys þat mony man hath sought 764
 3if þat god almyghti hold me my lif *and* my witte
 I wil be redy whan þe Iustice sitte
 Than saide sir Ote to Gamelyn god shild þe fro shame
 Come when þou seest tyme *and* bryng vs out of blame 768
 Litheþ and listeneþ and hold 3ow stille
 And 3e schul here how Gamelyn hadde his wille
 Gamelyn went vnder wood Rys
 And fond ther playng 3ong men of prys 772
 Tho was 3ong Gamelyn right glad I-noghe
 When he fonde his men vnder woode boghe
 Gamelyn and his men talkeden in fere
 And þei had gode game her maister to here 776

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. Royal MS 18 C ii.

His men told him of auentures þat þei had fonde
 And Gamelyn hem told hem a-zen how he was fast bonde
 While Gamelyn was outlaw hade he no cors
 þer was no man þat for him ferd þe wors 780
 But Abbotes and Priours monk' and Chanon
 On hem left he noght when he might hem nome
 While Gamelyn and his men made myrthes Ryve
 The fals knyght his brother euel mote he priue 784
 ffor he was fast aboute bothe day and other
 ffor to hire þe queste to hangen his brother
 Gamelyn stood on a day and be-beld
 The wodes and þe shawes and þe wild feld [leaf 66, back] 788
 He þoght on his brother how he him by-hette
 That he wolde be redy whan þe Iustice sette
 He þoght welle he wold with-oute delay
 Come a-fore þe Iustice to kepen his day 792
 And seide to his 3ong men dighteþ 3ow 3are
 ffor whan þe Iustice sitte we most be þere
 ffor I am vnder borow til þat I come
 And my brother for me to pryson shal be nome 796
 Be seint Iame said his 3ong men and þou rede þerto
 Ordeigne how it shal be and it shal be do
 While Gamelyn was comyng þer þe Iustice satte
 The fals knyght his broþer for-3ate he not þate 800
 To hire þe men on his quest to hangen his brother
 Thoghe þei hadde not þe oon þei wolde haue þe tother
 Tho come Gamelyn fro vnder þe wode Rys
 And broght with him 3ong men of prys 804
 I see wel seide Gamelyn þe Iustice is sette
 Goo a-forn Adam and loke how it spette
 Adam went in to þe halle and loked aif a-boute
 He say þer stonde lordes grete and stoute 808
 And sir Ote his brother fetered ful faste
 Tho wente Adam oute of halle as he were a-gast
 Adam seide to Gamelyn and to his felawes alle
 Sire Ote stant fetered in þe mote halle 812

[.	
. <i>no gap in the MS.]</i>	
3if god 3if vs grace wel for to doo	
He schal it a-bigge þat it broght þertoo	816
Than saide Adam þat lokkes hade hore	
Cristes curs mote he haue þat him bond so sore	
And þou wilt Gamelyn do after my rede	
Ther is none in þe halle schal bere away his hede	820
Adam seide Gamelyn we wil not do soo	
We wil sle þe giltif <i>and</i> late þe tother goo	
I wil in to þe halle and with þe Iustice speke	
On hem þat ben giltif I wil ben a-wreke	824
Lete none scape at þe dore take 3ong men 3eme	
ffor I wil be Iustice þis day domes to deme	
God spede me þis day at my new werke	
Adam come with me for þou shalt be my clerk	828
His men answerden him <i>and</i> bade him don his best	
And 3if þou to vs haue nede þou shalt fynde vs prest	
We wille stónd with þe while þat we may dure	[leaf 67]
And bute we wirken manly pay vs none hure	832
3ong men saide Gamelyn so mote I wel the	
As trusti a mayster 3e shal fynde me	
Right þere þe Iustice satte in þe halle	
In went Gamelyn amonges hem alle	836
Gamelyn lete vnfetere his brother out of bond	
Then seide sir Ote his brother þat was hende	
Thou haddest Almost Gamelyn dwellet to long	
ffor þe quest is oute on me þat I shuld hong	840
Brother seide Gamelyn so god 3eue me good rest	
þis day þe shul ben honged þat ben on þe quest	
And the Iustice bothe þat is þe Inge man	
And the Shirreue bothe þorgh him it by-gan	844
Than saide Gamelyn to þe Iustice	
Now is þi power done þou moste nedes rise	
Thou hast 3euen domes þat ben yuel dight	
I wille sitten in thi sete <i>and</i> dresden hem aright	848

The Iustice sate stille and rose not a-none
 And Gamelyn cleued his chike bone
 Gamelyn toke him in his armes *and* nomore spake
 But thrw him ouer þe barre *and* his arme brake 852
 Dorst none to Gamelyn say but goode
 ffor ferd of þe company þat with-oute stooede
 Gamely sette him down in þe Iustice sete
 And sir Ote his brother by him *and* Adam at his fete 856
 Whan Gamelyn was sette in þe Iustice sete
 Herken of a bourd þat Gamelyn dide
 He lete feter þe Iustice *and* his fals brother
 And lete hem come to þe barre þat on with þat other 860
 Tho Gamelyn hadde þus y-done hade no rest
 Til he hadde enquered who was on þe quest
 ffor to demen his brother sir Ote for to hong
 Er he wiste whiche þei were him þoght ful long 864
 But as sone as Gamelyn wiste where þai were
 He dide hem euerychon feter in fere
 And bringen hem to þe barre *and* setten hem in rew
 Bi my feith said þe Iustice þe shirreue is a shrew 868
 Than seide Gamelyn to þe Iustice
 Thow hast 3eue domes of the worst assise
 And the xij. sisoures þat weren on þe quest
 Thei shul ben honged þis day so haue I gode rest [leaf 67, back]
 Than saide þe shirreue to 3ong Gamelyn 873
 Lord .I. cry the mercy brother art þou myn
 Ther-fore saide Gamelyn haue þou cristes curs
 ffor and þou were maister 3it shuld I haue wors 876
 ffor to make short tale and noght to long
 He ordeyned hym a quest of his men so strong
 The Iustice *and* þe shirreue both honged hye
 To weyuen with þe ropes *and* þe wynd drye 880
 And the xij sisours sorow haue þat rewe
 Alle þei were hanged fast by þe nekke
 Thus endid þe fals knyght with his trecherie
 þat euer had lad his lif in falsenes *and* folie 884

APPENDIX TO GROUP A. GAMELYN. **Royal MS 18 C ii.**

He was honged by þe nekke *and* not by þe purs
 þat was þe mede þat he hadde for his faders curse
 Sire Otes was eldest *and* Gamelyn was 3ong
 Wenten to her frendes *and* passeden to þe kyng 888
 Thei maden pees with the kyng of þe best sise
 The kyng loued wel sir Ote *and* made him Iustice
 And after þe kyng made Gamelyn in Est *and* in Weste
 Chief Iustice of his fre foreste 892
 Alle his wight 3ong men þe kyng for-3af her gilt
 And sithen in gode Office þe kyng hath alle them pilt
 Thus wanne Gamelyn his lond and his lede
 And wreke him on his enemys *and* quite hem her mede 896
 And sire Ote his brother made him his heier
 And sithen wedden Gamelyn a wif gode *and* faier
 Thei lyueden to-gedre while þat crist wolde
 And sithen was Gamelyn grauen vnder molde 900
 And so shal we alle may þer no man fle
 God bring vs to þe Ioye þat euer shal be

[NOTICE—Inasmuch as, after the *Man of Law's Tale*, the order of the Tales in the *Ellesmere MS* differs from the right order of the Tales in which the *Six-Text* is to be arranged, the further issue of the separate Ellesmere Parts is suspended till all the Tales before the *Shipman's* in the *Ellesmere MS* have been issued in the *Six-Text*. Then the proper pagings of the separate Ellesmere sheets can be ascertained, and a large Part will be issued, bringing the separate issue abreast of the *Six-Text*. See the following scheme :—

<i>Six-Text</i>	<i>Ellesmere MS.</i>
rest of Group B { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>SHIPMAN</i> <i>Prioress</i> <i>Thopas</i> <i>Melibeus</i> <i>Monk</i> <i>Nun's Priest</i> 	Group D { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Wife of Bath</i> <i>Friar</i> <i>Summoner</i>
Group C { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Doctor</i> <i>Pardoner</i> 	Group E { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Clerk</i> <i>Merchant</i>
Group D { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Wife of Bath</i> <i>Friar</i> <i>Summoner</i> 	Group F { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Squire</i> <i>Franklin</i>
Group E { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Clerk</i> <i>Merchant</i> 	Group C { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Doctor</i> <i>Pardoner</i>
Group F { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Squire</i> <i>Franklin</i> 	rest of Group B { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>SHIPMAN</i> <i>Prioress</i> <i>Thopas</i> <i>Melibeus</i> <i>Monk</i> <i>Nun's Priest</i>
Group G { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Second Nun</i> <i>Canon's Yeoman</i> 	Group G { <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Second Nun</i> <i>Canon's Yeoman</i>
Group H <i>Manciple</i>	Group H <i>Manciple</i>
Group I <i>Parson</i>	Group I <i>Parson</i>]

1 January, 1871.

125a



GROUP B. (α. FRAGMENT II.)

§ 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMERE MS.

[leaf 53]

¶ The wordes of the Hoost^t to the compaignye

Ovre hoost saugh wel / that the brighte sonne
 The ark^t of his artificial day hath ronne
 The ferthe part^t and half an houre and moore
 And though^h / he were nat^t depe ystert in loore 4
 He wiste / it was the eighte and twentithe day
 Of April^h / that is messenger to May
 And saugh^h wel / that the shadwe of euery tree
 Was as in lengthe / the same quantitee 8
 That was the body erect^t that caused it
 And ther fore / by the shadwe / he took his wit
 That Phebus / which *pat* shoon / so clere and brighte
 Degrees / was fyue and fourty clombe on highte 12
 And for that day / as in that latitude
 It was ten at the klokke / he gan conclude
 And sodeynly / he plighte his hors aboute
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / I warne yow al this route 16
 The fourthe party of this day is gon
 Now for the loue of god / and of Seint Iohn
 Leseth no tyme / as ferforth as ye may
 Lordynges / the tyme wasteth nyght and day 20
 And steleth from vs / what pryuely slepyng
 And what thurgh necligence / in oure wakyng
 As dooth the streem / that turneth neuere agayn
 Descendynge fro the montaigne in to playn 24
 ¶ Wel kan Senec^t and many a philosophre
 Biwaillen tyme / moore than gold in cofre
 ffor losse of catel / may recouered be
 But losse of tyme / shendeth vs quod he 28

It wol nat come agayn / with outen drede
 Namooore / than wole Malkynes maydenhede
 Whan she hath lost it' in hir wantownesse
 Lat us nat' mowlen thus in ydelnesse 32
 ¶ Sire man of lawe quod he / so haue ye blis
 Telle vs a tale anon / as forward is
 Ye been submytted / thurgh youre free assent'
 To stonden in this cas / at my Iuggement' 36
 Acquiteth yow now / of youre biheeste
 Thanne haue ye do youre deuoir atte leeste
 ¶ Hoost quod he / depardieux ich assente
 To breke forward / is nat myn entente 40
 Biheste is dette / and I wole holde fayn
 Al my biheste / I kan no better sayn
 ffor swich lawe / as a man yeueth another wighit' [leaf 53, back]
 He sholde hym seluen / vsen it by right 44
 Thus wole oure text' but nathelees certeyn
 I kan right now / no thrifty tale seyn
 That Chaucer / thogh he kan but lewedly
 On metres / and on rymyng craftily 48
 Hath seyde hem / in swich englissñ / as he kan
 Of olde tyme / as knoweth many a man
 And if he haue noght seyde hem leue brother
 In o book / he hath seyde hem in another 52
 ffor he hath toold / of loueris vp and down /
 Mo than Ouide / made of mencioun
 In hise epistles / that been ful olde
 What sholde I telle hem / syn they ben tolde 56
 ¶ In youthe / he made / of Ceys and Alcione
 And sitthe / hath he spoken of euerichone
 Thise noble wyues / and thise loueris eke
 Who so that wole / his large volume seke 60
 Cleped / the seintes legende of Cupide
 Ther may he seen / the large woundes wyde
 Of Lucesse / and of Babilan Tesbee
 The swerd of Dido / for the false Enee 64

The tree of Phillis / for hire Demophon	
The pleinte of Diane / and of Hermyon	
Of Adriane / and of Isiphilee	
The bareyne yle / stondynge in the see	68
The dreynte Leandre / for his Erro	
The teeris of Eleyne / and the wo	
Of Brixseyde / and the Ladomya	
The crueltee / of the queene Medea	72
Thy litel children / hangynge by the hals	
ffor thy Iason / that was in loue so fals	
O Ypermystra / Penolopee / Alceste	
Youre wifhede / he comendeth with the beste	76
¶ But certainly no word ne writeth he	
Of thilke wikke ensample of Canacee	
That loued / hir owene brother synfully	
Of swiche cursed stories / I sey fy	80
Or ellis / of Tyro Appollonius	
How that the cursed kyng / Antiochus	
Birafte his doghter / of hir maydenhede	
That is / so horrible a tale for to rede	84
Whan he hir threw / vp on the pauement	
And therefore he / of ful auysement	
Nolde neuere write / in none of his sermons	
Of swiche / vnkynde abhomynacions	88
Ne I wol noon reherce / if that I may	
¶ But of my tale / how shall I doon this day	
Me were looth / be likned doutelees	[leaf 54]
To Muses / that men clepe Pierides	92
Methamorphosios / woot what I mene	
But nathelees / I recche nocht a bene	
Though I come after hym / with hawebake	
I speke in prose / and lat him rymes make	96
And with that word / he with a sobre cheere	
Bigan his tale / as ye shal after heere	98

¶ The prologe of the mannes tale of lawe

O hateful harm / condicion of pouerte 99
 With thurst with coold / with hunger so confoundid
 To asken help / thee shameth in thyn herte
 If thou noon aske / so soore artow ywoundid 102
 That verray nede / vnwrappeth al thy wounde hid
 Maugree thyn heed / thou most for Indigence
 Or stele / or begge / or borwe thy despence 105

Thow blamest crist and seist ful bitterly
 He mysdeparteth / richesse temporal
 Thy neighebore / thou wytest synfully
 And seist thou hast to lite / and he hath al 109
 Parfay seistow / somtyme he rekene shal
 Whan that his tayl / shal brennen in the gleede
 ffor he noght helpeth / needfulle / in hir neede 112

¶ Herke / what is the sentence of the wise
 Bet is to dyen / than haue Indigence
 Thy selue neighebor / wol thee despise
 If thou be poure / farwel thy reuerence 116
 Yet of the wise man / take this sentence
 Alle dayes of poure men been wikke
 Be war therfore / er thou come to that prikke 119

If thou be poure / thy brother hateth thee
 And alle thy freendes / fleen from thee alas
 O riche marchauntz / ful of wele been yee
 O noble / o prudent folk / as in this cas 123
 Your bagges / been nat fild with ambes as
 But with sys cyk / that renneth for youre chaunce
 At Cristemasse / myrie may ye daunce 126

Ye seken lond and see / for yowre wynnynges [leaf 54, back]
 As wise folk' ye knowen all thestaat'
 Of regnes / ye been fadres of tidynges
 And tales / bothe of pees / and of debaat' 130
 I were right now / of tales desolaat'
 Nere that a Marchant' goon is many a yeere
 Me taughte a tale / which that ye shal heere 133

As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.

1. 161. Europa est tertia pars mundi.

1. 197. ¶ Ceptra Phorenei fratrum discordia Thebe
 ¶ flammam Phetontis Deucalionis Aque ¶ In stellis Priami /
 species Audacia Turni ¶ Sensus Vlixæus Herculeus que vigor.
 [MS, leaf 55.]

1. 295. ¶ Vnde Ptholomeus. libro i°. capitulo. 8°. ¶ Primi motus
 celi duo sunt quorum vnus est qui mouet totum semper ab
 Oriente in Occidentem / vno modo super orbis &c. / Item al[i]ter
 vero motus est qui mouet orbem stellarum currencium contra motum
 primum / videlicet / ab Occidente in Orientem super alios duos
 polos, &c. [MS, leaf 56, back.]

1. 309. ¶ Omnes concordati sunt / quod electiones sint debiles
 nisi in diuitibus / habent enim isti licet debilitentur eorum elec-
 tionis radicem. i. natiuitates eorum que conforta[n]t omnem plane-
 tam debilem in itinere &c. [MS, leaf 56, back.]

1. 421. ¶ Nota de inopinato dolore ¶ Semper mundane leticie
 tristicia repentina succedit / Mundana igitur felicitas multis ama-
 ritudinibus est respersa / extrema gaudii luctus occupat. Audi ergo
 salubre consilium / In die bonorum ne immemor sis malorum.
 [MS, leaf 58.]

1. 771. ¶ Quid turpius ebrioso / cui fetor in ore tremor in cor-
 pore / qui promit stulta / prodit occulta / cuius mens alienatur /
 facies transformatur / nullum enim latet secretum vbi regnat
 ebrietas. [MS, leaf 62.]

1. 925. ¶ O extrema libidinis turpitude que non solum mentem
 effeminat / set eciam corpus eneruat / semper sequuntur dolor &
 penitentia post &cetera. [MS, leaf 64.]

1. 1132. ¶ A mane vsque ad vesperam mutabitur tempus /
 tenent tympanum & gaudent / ad sonum organi &cetera. [MS,
 leaf 66, back.]

1. 1135. ¶ Quis vnquam vnquam diem totam duxit / in sua
 dileccione iocundam quem in aliqua parte diei reatus consciencie /
 vel impetus Ire vel motus concupiscencie non turbauerit / quem
 liuor Inuidie / vel Ardor Auaricie / vel tumor superbie non vex-
 auerit / quem aliqua iactura vel offensa / vel passio non com-
 mouerit &cetera. [MS, leaf 66, back.]

¶ Heere begynneth the man of lawe his tale

IN Surrye whilom dwelte a compaignye [Painting of the Man
of Law, on the left.]
 Of chapmen riche / and therto sadde and trewe
 That wyde where / senten hir spicerye
 Clothes of gold / and satyns riche of hewe 137
 Hir chaffare / was so thrifty and so newe
 That euery wight / hath deyntee to chaffare
 With hem / and eek / to sellen hem hire ware 140

Now fil it that the maistres / of that sort
 Han shapen hem / to Rome for to wende
 Were it for chapmanhode / or for disport
 Noon oother message / wolde they thider sende 144
 But comen hem self to Rome / this is the ende
 And in swich place / as thoughte hem auantage
 ffor hire entente / they take hir herbergage 147

¶ Soiourned han this Marchantz / in that toun
 A certain tyme / as fil to hire plesance
 And so bifel / that the excellent renoun
 Of the Emperours doghter / Dame Custance 151
 Reported was / with euery circumstance
 Vn to this Surryen Marchantz / in swich a wyse
 ffro day to day / as I shal yow deuyse 154

¶ This was the commune voys of every man
 Oure Emperour of Rome / god hym see
 A doghter hath / that syn the world bigan
 To rekene as wel / hir goodnesse as beautee 158
 Nas neuere / swich another as is shee
 I prey to god / in honour hire susteene
 And wolde she were / of all Europe the queene

[Latin note,
p. 133.]

In hire / is heigh beautee / with oute pride [leaf 55]
 Yowthe / with oute grenehede / or folye
 To alle hire werkes / vertu is hir gyde
 Humblesse / hath slayn in hire al tyrannye 165
 She is Mirour / of alle curteisye
 Hir herte / is verray chambre of hoolynesse
 Hir hand / Ministre of fredam for almesse 168

And al this voys was sooth / as god is trewe
 But now to purpos / lat vs turne agayn
 Thise Marchantz / han doon fraught / hir shippes newe
 And whan they han / this blisful mayden sayn 172
 Hoom to Surrye / been they went ful fayn
 And doon hir nedes / as they han doon yoore
 And lyuen in wele / I kan sey yow namoore 175

¶ Now fil it that thise Marchantz / stode in grace
 Of hym / that was the Sowdan of Surrye
 ffor whan they cam / from any strange place
 He wolde / of his benigne curteisye 179
 Make hem good chiere / and bisily espye
 Tidynge / of sondry regnes for to leere
 The wondres / that they myghte seen or heere 182

Amonges othere thynges specially
 Thise Marchantz / han hym toold / of dame Custance
 So greet noblesse / in earnest ^{i. ceriose} ceriously
 That this Sowdan / hath caught so greet plesance 186
 To han hir figure / in his remembrance
 That all his lust and al his bisy cure
 Was for to loue hire / while his lyf may dure 189

Paraenture / in thilke large book/
 Which pat men clipe the heuene / ywriten was
 With sterres / whan that he his birthe took/
 That he for loue / sholde han his deeth allas 193

For in the sterres / clerer than is glas
 Is writen god woot' who so koude it rede
 The deeth of euery man / withouten drede 196

In sterres many a wynter / ther biforn [Latin Note, p. 133.]
 Was writen the deeth / of Ector / Achilles
 Of Pompei Iulius / er they were born
 The strif of Thebes / and of Ercules 200
 Of Sampson / Turnus / and of Socrates
 The deeth / but mennes wittes ben so dulle
 That no wight' kan wel rede it atte fulle 203

¶ This Sowdan / for his priuee conseil sente [leaf 55, back]
 And shortly / of this matiere for to pace
 He hath to hem / declared his entente
 And seyde hem *certein* / but he myghte haue *grace* 207
 To han Custance / with-Inne a litel space
 He nas but deed / and charged hem in hye
 To shapen for his lyf / som remedye 210

¶ Diuerse men / diuerse thynges seyden
 They argumenten / casten vp and doun
 Many a subtil resoun / forth they leyden
 They speken of / Magyk' and Abusioñ 214
 But finally / as in conclusioñ
 They kan nat seen / in that noon auantag
 Ne in noon oother wey saue mariage 217

Thanne sawe they ther-Inne swich difficultee
 By wey of reson / for to speke al playn
 By cause / that ther was swich diuersitee
 Bitwene hir bothe lawes / that they sayn 221
 They trowe / þat no cristene prince wolde fayn
 Wedden his child / vnder oure lawes sweete
 That vs were taught' by Mahoun oure prophete 224

¶ And he answerde / rather than I lese
 Custance. / I wol be cristned doutelees
 I moot been hires / I may noon oother chese
 I prey yow / hoold youre argumentz in pees 228
 Saueth my lyf / and beth noght recchelees
 To geten hire / that hath my lyf in cure
 For in this wo / I may nat longe endure 231

¶ What nedeth / gretter dilataciō
 I seye / by tretys / and Embassadrie
 And by / the popes mediaciō
 And al the chirche / and al the chiuallrie 235
 That in destrucciō of Maumetrie
 And in encrees / of cristes lawe deere
 They been acorded / so as ye shal heere 238

How that the sowdan / and his Baronage
 And alle hise liges / sholde yristned be
 And he shal han / Custance / in mariage
 And *certein* gold / I noot what quantitee 242
 And heer to founden / sufficient suretee
 This same accord / was sworn on eyther syde
 Now faire Custance / almyghty god thee gyde 245

¶ Now wolde som men / waiten as I gesse [leaf 56]
 That I sholde tellen / al the *purueiance*
 That themperour / of his grete noblesse
 Hath shapen / for his doghter dame Custance 249
 Wel may men knowen / þat so greet ordinance
 May no man tellen / in a litel clause
 As was arrayed / for so heigh a cause 252

Bisshopes been shapen / with hire for to wende
 Lordes / ladies / knyghtes of renoun
 And oother folk ynogh / this is thende
 And notified is / thurgh out the toun 256

That euery wight / with greet deuocioun
 Sholde preyen crist' that he this mariage
 Receyue in gree / and spede this viage 259

¶ The day is comen / of hir departyng
 I seye / the woful day fatal is come
 That ther may be / no lenger tariyng
 But forthward they hem dresen / alle and some 263
 Custance / þat was with sorwe al ouercome
 ful pale arist' and dreseth hire to wende
 for wel she seeth / ther is noon oother ende 266

Allas / what wonder is it' thogh she wepte
 That shal be sent / to strange nacioñ
 ffro freendes þat so tendrely hire kepte
 And to be bounden / vnder subieccioñ 270
 Of oon / she knoweth nat his condicioñ
 Housbondes been alle goode / and han ben yoore
 That knowen wyues / I dar say yow na moore 273

¶ ffader she seyde / thy wrecched child Custance
 Thy yonge doghter / fostred vp so soft
 And ye my mooder / my souerayn plesance
 Ouer alle thyng' out taken crist on lofte 277
 Custance youre child / hire recomandeth ofte
 Vn to your grace / for I shal to Surrye
 Ne shal I neuere / seen yow moore with eye 280

Allas / vn to the Barbre nacioñ
 I moste goon / syn that it is youre wille
 But crist' that starf / for our sauacioñ
 So yeue me grace / hise heestes to fulfille 284
 I wrecche womman / no fors / though I spille
 Wommen are born / to thraldom and penance
 And to been / vnder mannes gouernance 287

¶ I trowe at Troye / whan Pirrus brak / the wal [leaf 56, back]
 Or Ilion / brende Thebes the Citee
 Nat Rome / for the harm thurgh Hanybal
 That Romayns / hath venquysshed tymes thre 291
 Nas herd / swich tendre wepyng^t for pitee
 As in the chambre was for hire departyng
 But forth she moot^t wher so she wepe or synge 294

¶ O firste moeuyng / crueel firmament^t [Latin note, p. 133.]
 With thy diurnal sweighⁿ / that crowdest ay
 And hurlest al / from Est til Occident^t
 That naturelly / wolde holde another way 298
 Thy crowdyng / set the heuene in swich array
 At the bigynnyng^t of this fiers viage
 That crueel Mars / hath slayn this mariage 301

Infortunat Ascendent^t tortuous
 Of which / the lord is helplees falle allas
 Out of his Angle / in to the derkeste hous
 O Mars / o Atazir / as in this cas 305
 O fieble Moone / vnhappy been thy paas
 Thou knytttest thee / ther thou art nat receyued
 Ther thou were weel / fro thennes artow weyued 308

Imprudent Emperour / of Rome allas [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Was ther / no philosophre / in al thy toun
 Is no tyme bet than oother / in swich cas
 Of viage / is ther noon eleccion 312
 Namely / to folk / of heigh condicioⁿ
 Noght whan a roote / is of a burthe yknowe
 Allas / we been / to lewed or to slowe 315

¶ To shi^p is come / this woful faire mayde
 Solempnely / with euery circumstance
 Now Ihesu crist^t be with yow alle she sayde
 Ther nys namoore / but farewel / faire Custance 319

She peyneth hire / to make good contenance
 And forth / I lete hire saille / in this manere
 And turne I wole / agayn to my matere 322

¶ The mooder / of the Sowdan / welle of vices
 Espied hath / hir sones pleyn entente
 How he wol lete / hise olde sacrifices
 And right anon / she for hir conseil sente 326
 And they been come / to knowe what she mente
 And whan assembled was / this folk' in feere
 She sette hire doun / and seyde as ye shal heere 329

¶ Lordes / she seyde / ye knowen euerichon [leaf 57]
 How that my sone / in point is for to lete
 The hooly lawes / of oure Alkaron
 Yeuen by goddes message Makomete 333
 But oon auow / to grete god I heete
 The lyf shal rather / out of my body sterte
 Than Makometes lawe / out of myn herte 336

What sholde vs tyden / of this newe lawe
 But thraldom to our bodies and penance
 And afterward / in helle to be drawe
 ffor we reneyed / Mahoun oure creance 340
 But lordes / wol ye maken assurance
 As I shal seyn / assentyng to my loore
 And I shal make vs sauf for eueremoore 343

¶ They sworn / and assenten euery man
 To lyue with hire and dye / and by hire stonde
 And euerich / in the beste wise he kan
 To strengthen hire / shal alle hise frendes fonde 347
 And she hath / this emprise ytake on honde
 Which ye shal heren / that I shal deuysen
 And to hem alle / she spak right in this wyse 350

¶ We shul first feyne vs / cristendom to take
 Could water / shal nat greue vs but a lite
 And I shal / swiche a feeste and reuel make
 That as I trowe / I shal the Sowdan quite 354
 ffor thogh his wyf / be cristned neuer so white
 She shal haue nede / to wasshē away the rede
 Thogh she / a font ful water / with hire lede 357

O Sowdanesse / roote of Iniquitee ¶ Auctor
 Virago / thou Semyrame the secounde
 O serpent / vnder femynynytee
 Lik to the serpent depe in helle ybounde 361
 O feyned womman / al that may confounde
 Vertu and Innocence / thurgh thy malice
 Is bred in thee / as nest of euery vice 364

O Sathan enuious / syn thilke day
 That thou were chaced from oure heritage
 Wel knowestow / to wommen the olde way
 Thou madest Eua / brynge vs in seruage 368
 Thou wolt fordoon / this cristen mariage
 Thyn Instrument so weylawey the while
 Makestow of wommen / whan thou wolt bigile 371

¶ This Sowdanesse / whom I thus blame and warye [1f 57, bk]
 Leet priuely / hire conseil goon hire way
 What sholde I in this tale lenger tarye
 She rydeth to the Sowdan / on a day 375
 And seyde hym / that she wolde reneye hir lay
 And cristendom / of preestes handes fonge
 Repentyng hire / she hethen was so longe 378

Bisechyng hym / to doon hire that honour
 That she moste han / the cristen folk to feeste
 To plesen hem I wol do my labour
 The Sowdan seith / I wol doon at youre heeste 382

And knelynge / thanketh hire of that requeste
 So glad he was / he nyste what to seye
 She kiste hir sone / and hoome she gooth hir weye 385

¶ Explicit prima pars

¶ Sequitur pars secunda 𐄂

Arryued been / this cristen folk to londe
 In Surrye / with a greet solempne route
 And hastifiche / this Sowdan sente his sonde
 first to his mooder / and all the regne aboute 389
 And seyde / his wyf was comen oute of doute
 And preyde hire / for to ryde agayn the queene
 The honour of his regne / to susteene 392

Greet was the prees / and riche was tharray
 Of Surryens and Romayns met yfeere
 The mooder of the Sowdan / riche and gay
 Recyueth hire / with also glad a cheere 396
 As any mooder / myghte hir doghter deere
 And to the nexte Citee / ther bisyde
 A softe paas / solempnely they ryde 399

¶ Noght trowe I / the triumphe of Iulius
 Of which / that Lucan maketh swich a boost
 Was reialler / or moore curius
 Than was thassemblee / of this blisful hoost 403
 But this scorpion / this wikked goost
 The Sowdanesse / for all hire flaterynge
 Caste vnder this / ful mortally to styng 406

¶ The Sowdan comth hym self soone after this [leaf 58]
 So roially / that wonder is to telle
 And welcometh hire / with alle ioye and blis
 And thus / in murthe and ioye I lete hem dwelle 410

The fruyt of this matiere / is that I telle
 Whan tyme cam / men thoughte it for the beste
 The reuel stynte / and men goon to hir reste 413

¶ The tyme cam / this olde Sowdanesse
 Ordeyned hath this feeste / of which I tolde
 And to the feeste / cristen folk hem dresse
 In general / ye bothe yonge and olde 417
 Heere may men / feeste / and roialtee bihold
 And deyntees mo / than I kan yow deuyse
 But all to deere / they boghte it er they ryse 420

Osodeyn wo / that euere art successour [Latin note, p. 133.]
 To worldly blisse / spreynd *with* bitternesse
 The ende of the ioie / of oure worldly labour
 Wo occupieth / the fyn of oure gladnesse 424
 Herke this conseil / for thy sikernesse
 Vp on thy glade day / haue in thy mynde
 The vnwar wo / or harm þat comth bihynde 427

ffor soothly / for to tellen / at o word
 The sowdan / and the cristen everichone
 Been' al tohewe / and stiked at the bord
 But it were oonly / dame Custance allone 431
 This olde Sowdanesse / cursed krone
 Hath *with* hir freendes / doon this cursed dede
 ffor she hir self / wolde all the contree lede 434

Ne was Surryen noon / that was conuerted
 That of the conseil / of the Sowdan woot'
 That he nas al tohewe / er he astered
 And Custance / han they take anon foot hoot' 438
 And in a ship / all steerelees god woot'
 They han hir set' and biddeth hire lerne saille
 Out of Surrye / agaynward to Ytaille 441

A certein tresor / that she with hire ladde
 And sooth to seyn / vitaille greet plentee
 They han hire yeuen / and clothes eek she hadde
 And forth she sailleth / in the salte see 445
 O my Custance / ful of benignytee
 O Emperours yonge doghter deere
 He that is lord of ffortune be thy steere 448

She blesseth hire / and with ful pitous voys [leaf 58, back]
 Vn to the croys of Crist thus seyde she
 O cleere / o woful Auter / hooly croys
 Reed of the lambes blood / ful of pitee 452
 That wesshe the world / fro the olde Iniquitee
 Me fro the feend / and fro his clawes kepe
 That day / that I shal drenchen in the depe 455

Victorious tree / proteccioñ of trewe
 That oonly / worthy were for to bere
 The kyng of heuene / with his woundes newe
 The white lamb / þat hurt was with the spere 459
 flemere of feendes / out of hym and here
 On which / thy lymes / feithfully extenden
 Me helpe / and yif me myght / my lyf tamenden 462

¶ Yeres and dayes / fleteth this creature
 Thurghout the See of Grece / vn to the Strayte
 Of Marrok. as it was hire Auenture
 On many a sory meel / now may she bayte 466
 After hir deeth / ful often may she wayte
 Er that the wilde wawes / wol hire dryue
 Vn to the place / ther she shal arryue 469

Men myghten asken / why she was nat slayn
 Eek at the feeste / who myglite hir body saue
 And I answeere / to that demande agayn
 Who saued danyel / in the horrible Caue 473

Ther euery wight saue he / maister and knaue
 Was with the leon frete / er he asterte
 No wight but god / that he bar in his herte 476

God liste to shewe / his wonderful myracle
 In hire / for we sholde seen / his myghty werkis
 Crist which that is / to euery harm triacle
 By certeine meenes ofte / as knowen clerkis 480
 Dooth thyng for certein ende / that ful derk is
 To mannes wit/. that for oure ignorance
 Ne konne nocht knowe / his prudent purueiance 483

¶ Now sith she was nat / at the feeste yslawe
 Who kepte hire / fro the drenchyng / in the see?
 Who kepte Jonas / in the fisshes mawe
 Til he / was spouted vp at Nynyuee? 487
 Wel may men knowe / it was no wight but he
 That kepte peple Ebrayk from hir drenchyng
 With drye feet thurgh out the see passynge 490

¶ Who bad the foure spirites of tempest [leaf 59]
 That power han / tanoyen lond and see
 Bothe North and South / and also west and Est
 Anoyeth neither / see / ne land ne tree 494
 Soothly / the Comandour of that was he
 That fro the tempest / ay this womman kepte
 As wel / when she wook as whan she slepte 497

¶ Where myghte this womman / mete and drynke haue?
 Thre yeer and moore / how lasteth hire vitaille?
 Who fedde / the Egypcien Marie in the Caue?
 Or in desert? no wight but crist / sanz faille 501
 ffyue thousand folk / it was as greet meruaille
 With loues fyue / and fisshes two to feede
 God sente his foyson / at hir grete neede 504

¶ She dryueth forth / in to oure Occian
 Thurgh out oure wilde see / til atte laste
 Vnder an hoold / that nempnen I ne kan
 ffer in Northhumberlonð / the wawe hire caste 508
 And in the sond / hir shiþ / stiked so faste
 That thennes wolde it noght' of al a tyde
 The wyl of crist'. was þat she sholde abyde 511

¶ The Constable of the Castel / doun is fare
 To seen his wrak' and al the shiþ he soghte
 And foond' / this very womman ful of care
 He foond also / the tresor þat she broghte 515
 In hir langage / mercy she bisoghte
 The lyf / out of hire body for to twynne
 Hire to deliuere / of wo / that she was Inne 518

A maner latyn corrupt / was hir speche
 But algates / ther by was she vnderstonde
 The Constable / whan hym lyst' no lenger seche
 This woful womman / broghte he to the londe 522
 She kneleth doun / and thanketh goddes sonde
 But what she was / she wolde no man seye
 ffor foul ne fair / thogh þat she sholde deye 525

She seyde / she was / so mazed in the see
 That she forgat hir mynde / by hir trouthe
 The Constable / hath of hire so greet pitee
 And eke his wyf / that they wepen for routhe 529
 She was so diligent' with outen slouthe
 To serue and plese / euerich in that place
 That alle hir louen / that looken in hir face 532

¶ This Constable / and dame Hermengylð his wyf/ [1f 59, bk]
 Were payens / and that contree eury where
 But Hermengylð / loued hire right as hir lyf
 And Custance / hath so longe soiourned there 536

In orisons / with many a bitter teere
 Til Ihesu / hath conuerted / thurgh his grace
 Dame Hermengyld / Constablesse of that place 539

In al that lond / no cristen dorste route .
 Alle cristen folk / been fled fro that contree
 Thurgh Payens / that conquereden al aboute
 The plages of the North by land and see 543
 To Walys / fledde the Cristyanytee
 Of olde Britons / dwellynge in this Ile
 Ther was hir refut for the meene while 546

But yet nere cristene Britons so exiled
 That ther nere somme / that in hir priuetece
 Honoured crist and hethen folk bigiled
 And ny the Castel / swiche ther dwelten three 550
 That oon of hem was blynd / and myghte nat see
 But it were / with thilke eyen of his mynde
 With whiche men seen / whan þat they ben blynde 553

Bright was the sonne / as in that someres day
 ffor which the Constable / and his wyf also
 And Custance / han ytake the righte way
 Toward the see / a furlong wey or two 557
 To pleyen / and to romen to romen¹ to and fro [1 so]
 And in hir walk this blynde man they mette
 Croked and oold / with eyen faste yshette 560

In name of Crist cride this olde Britoñ
 Dame Hermengyld / yif me / my sighte agayn
 This lady / weex affrayed of the soun
 Lest that hir housbonde / shortly for to sayn 564
 Wolde hire / for Ihesu cristes loue han slayn
 Til Custance made hire boold / and bad hire wirche
 The wyl of Crist as doghter of his chirche 567

¶ The Constable / weex abashed of that sight
 And seyde / what amounteth all this fare
 Custance answerde / sire / it is cristes myght
 That helpeth folk / out of the feendes snare 571
 And so ferforth / she gan oure lay declare
 That she the Constable / er that it were eue
 Conuerteth / and on Crist maketh hym bileue 574

This Constable / was no thyng lord of this place [leaf 60]
 Of which I speke / ther he Custance fond
 But kepte it strongly many wyntres space
 Vnder Alla / kyng of al Northhumbrelond 578
 That was ful wys / and worthy of his hond
 Agayn the Scottes / as men may wel heere
 But turne I wole / agayn to my mateere 581

¶ Sathan / that euere vs waiteth to bigile
 Saugh of Custance / al hire perfeccioun
 And caste anon / how he myghte quite hir while
 And made a yong knyght / þat dwelte in that toun 585
 Loue hire so hote of foul affeccioun
 That verrailly / hym thoughte he sholde spille
 But he of hire myghte ones haue his wille 588

He woveth hire / but it auailleth noght/
 She wolde do no synne / by no weye
 And for despit he compassed in his thoght
 To maken hire / on shameful deeth to deye 592
 He wayteth / whan the Constable was awaye
 And pryuely / vp on a nyght he crepte
 In Hermengylde chambre / whil she slepte 595

¶ Wery / for-waked / in hire orisois
 Slepeth Custance / and Hermengylde also
 This knyght thurgh Sathans temptaciois
 All softely / is to the bed ygo 599

And kitte the throte / of Hermengylde atwo
 And leyde the blody knyf / by dame Custance
 And wente his wey / ther god yeue hym meschance 602

¶ Soone after / cometh this Constable hoom agayn
 And eek Alla / þat kyng was of that lond
 And saugh his wyf / despitously yslayn
 ffor which ful ofte he weep̄ / and wroong his hond 606
 And in the bed / the blody knyf he fond
 By Dame Custance / allas what myghte she seye
 For verray wo / hir wit was al aweye 609

¶ To kyng Alla / was toold al this meschance
 And eek the tyme / and where / and in what wise
 That in a ship / was founden dame Custance
 As heer biforn / that ye han herd deuyse 613
 The kynges herte / of pitee gan agryse
 Whan he saugh / so benigne a creature
 ffalle in disese / and in mysaventure 616

ffor as the lomb / toward his deeth is broght̄ [leaf 60, back]
 So stant this Innocent̄ bifore the kynḡ
 This false knyght̄ þat hath this treson wroght̄
 Berth hire on hond / þat she hath doon thys thynḡ 620
 But nathelees / ther was greet moornynḡ
 Among the peple / and seyn / they kan nat gesse
 That she had doon / so greet a wikkednesse 623

ffor they / han seyn hire euere so vertuous
 And louynge Hermengylde / right as hir lyf/
 Of this baar witesse / euerich in that hous
 Saue he / þat Hermengylde / slow with his knyf/ 627
 This gentil kyng / hath caught a greet motyf
 Of this witesse / and thoghte he wolde enquere
 Depper in this / a trouthe for to lere 630

¶ Allas Custance / thou hast no champion
 Ne fighte kanstow noght' so weylaway
 But he / that starf for our redempcion
 And boond Sathan / and yet lith ther he lay 634
 So be / thy stronge champion this day
 ffor but if crist' open myracle kithe
 Withouten gilt' thou shalt be slayn as swithe 637

She sit hire doun on knees / and thus she sayde
 Immortal god / that sauedest Susanne
 ffro fals blame / and thou merciful mayde
 Mary I meene / doghter to Seint Anne 641
 Bifore whos child / Angeles synge Osanne
 If I be giltlees / of this felonye
 My socour be / or ellis shal I dye 644

Hae ye nat seyn / som tyme a pale face
 Among' a prees / of hym þat hath be lad
 Toward his deeth / wher as hym gat no grace
 And swich a colour / in his face hath had 648
 Men myghite knowe / his face that was bistad
 Amonges alle the faces / in that route
 So stant Custance / and looketh hire aboute 651

O Queenes / lyuyng in prosperitee
 Duchesses / and ladyes euerichone
 Haueth som routhe / on hire Aduersitee
 An Emperours doghter / stant allone 655
 She hath no wight' / to whom to make hir mone
 O blood roial / that stondest in this drede
 ffer been thy freendes / at thy grete nede 658

This Alla kyng' hath swich compassioun [leaf 61]
 As gentil herte / is fulfild of pitee
 That from hise eyen / ran the water doun
 Now hastily / do fecche a book' quod he 662

And if this knyght wol sweren how þat she
 This womman slow / yet wol we vs auyse
 Whom þat we wole / that shal been our Iustise 665

A Britoñ book / written with Euaungiles
 Was fet and on this book he swoor anon
 She gilte was / and in the meene whiles
 An hand hym smoot vpon the nekke boon 669
 That doun he fil / atones as a stoon
 And bothe hise eyen / broste out of his face
 In sighte / of euery body in that place 672

¶ A voys was herd / in general Audieñce
 And seyde thōu hast desclaundred giltles
 The doghter of hooly chirche / in heigh presence
 Thus hastou doon / and yet holde I my pees 676
 Of this meruaille / agast was al the prees
 As mazed folk they stoden euerichone
 ffor drede of wreche / saue Custance allone 679

¶ Greet was the drede / and eek the repentance
 Of hem / that hadden wronge suspicioñ
 Vpon / this sely Innocent Custance
 And for this miracle in conclusioñ 683
 And by Custances mediacioñ
 The kyng and many another in that place
 Conuerted was / thanked be cristes grace 686

¶ This false knyght was slayn for his vntrouthe
 By Iuggement of Alla hastifly
 And yet Custance / hadde of his deeth greet routhe
 And after this Ihesus of his mercy 690
 Made Alla wedden ful solempnely
 This hooly mayden / that is so bright and sheene
 And thus hath crist ymaad Custance a queene 693

But who was woful / if I shal nat lye
 Of this weddyng^t but Donegild^t and na mo
 The kynges mooder / ful of tirannye
 Hir thoughte / hir cursed herte brast atwo 697
 She wolde noght hir sone had do so
 Hir thoughte a despit^t that he sholde take
 So strange a creature vn to his make 700

¶ Me list nat of the chaf / or of the stree [leaf 61, back]
 Maken so long a tale / as of the corn
 What sholde I tellen / of the roialtee
 At mariages / or which cours goth biforn 704
 Who bloweth in the trumpe / or in an horn
 The fruyt^t of euyry tale / is for to seye
 They ete / and drynke / and daunce / and synge and pleye

They goon to bedde / as it was skile and right^t
 ffor thogh þat wyues / be ful hooly thynges
 They moste take / in pacience at nyght^t
 Swiche manere necessities / as been plesynges 711
 To folk / þat han ywedded hem with rynges
 And leye a lite / hir hoolynesse aside
 As for the tyme / it may no bet bitide 714

On hire he gat^t a man¹ childe anon [1 altered from knaue.]
 And to a bissþop / and his Constable eke
 He took his wyf to kepe / whan he is gon
 To Scotlondward / his foomen for to seke 718
 Now faire Custance / that is so humble and meke
 So longe is goon with childe / til that stille
 She halt hire chambre / abidyng^t cristes wille 721

The tyme is come / a man¹ child she beer
 Mauricius at the fontstoon / they hym calle
 This Constable / dooth forth come a Messageer
 And wroot vn to his kyng^t that cleped was Alle 725

How that this blisful tidyng^t is bifalle
 And othere tidynges / spedeful for to seye
 He taketh the lettre / and forth he gooth his weye 728

¶ This Messenger / to doon his auantage
 Vn to the kynges mooder rideth swithe
 And salueth hire ful faire in his langage
 Madame quod he / ye may be glad and blithe 732
 And thanketh god / an hundred thousand sithe
 My lady queene / hath child with outen doute
 To ioye and blisse / to al this regne aboute 735

Lo heere the lettres / seled of this thyng^t
 That I moot bere / with al the haste I may
 If ye wol aught^t vn to youre sone the kyng/
 I am youre seruant^t bothe nyght^t and day 739
 Donegild answerde / as now at this tyme nay
 But heere al nyght^t / I wol thou take thy reste
 To-morwe / wol I seye thee / what me leste 742

¶ This Messenger / drank sadly ale and wyn [leaf 62]
 And stolen were hise lettres pryuely
 Out of his box / whil he sleep^þ as a swyn
 And countrefeted was ful subtilly 746
 Another lettre / wroght^t ful synfully
 Vn to the kyng direct^t of this mateere
 ffro his Constable / as ye shal after heere 749

The lettre spak^t the queene deliuered was
 Of so horrible a feendly creature
 That in the Castel / noon so hardy was
 That any while / dorste ther endure 753
 The mooder was an Elf by auenture
 Ycomen / by charmes / or by sorcerie
 And euerich / hateth hir compaignye 756

¶ Wo was this kyng^r whan he this lettre had sayn
 But to no wight^r he tolde his sorwes soore
 But of his owene hand / he wroot agayn
 Wel come the sonde of crist^r for eueremoore 760
 To me / that am now lerned in his loore
 Lord / wel come be thy lust^r and thy plesaunce
 My lust^r I putte al in thyn ordinaunce 763

Kepeth this child / al be it foul or feir
 And eek my wyf / vn to myn hoom comyng
 Crist whan hym list^r may sende me an heir
 Moore agreable than this / to my likyng 767
 This lettre he selet^r pryuely wepyng
 Which to the Messager / was take soone
 And forth he gooth / ther is na moore to doone 770

O Messager / fulfild of dronkenesse [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Strong is thy breeth / thy lymes faltren ay
 And thou biwreyest / alle secreenesse
 Thy mynde is lorn / thou ianglest as a Iay 774
 Thy face is turned / in a newe array
 Ther dronkenesse / regneth in any route
 Ther is no conseil hyd / with outen doute 777

O Donegild / I ne haue noon engliss^h digne
 Vn to thy malice / and thy tirannye
 And therefore / to the feend I thee resigne
 Lat hym enditen / of thy traitorie 781
 ffy mannysh^h fy / o nay by god I lye
 ffy feendlych spirit^r for I dar wel telle
 Thogh thou heere walke / thy spirit is in helle 784

¶ This Messager / comth fro the kyng agayn [leaf 62, back]
 And at the kynges moodres¹ court he lighte¹ [1-1 corrected.]
 And she was / of this Messager ful fayn
 And plesed hym / in al that^rauer she myghte 788

He drank / and wel his girdel vnderpighte
 He slepeth / and he snoreth in his gyse
 All nyght til the sonne gan aryse 791

Eft were hise lettres stolen euerychon
 And countrefeted lettres / in this wyse
 The king¹ comandeth / his Constable anon [1 king later]
 Vp peyne of hangyng and on heigh Iuyse 795
 That he ne sholde / suffren in no wyse
 Custance / in with his Reawme for tabyde
 Thre dayes / and o quarter of a tyde 798

But in the same ship / as he hire fond
 Hire and hir yonge sone / and al hir geere
 He sholde putte / and croude hire fro the lond
 And chargen hire / she neuer eft coome there 802
 O my Custance / wel may thy goost haue feere
 And slepyng in thy dreem / been in penance
 Whan Donegild / cast al this ordinance 805

¶ This Messager / on morwe / whan he wook
 Vn to the Castel / halt the nexte way
 And to the Constable / he the lettre took
 And whan þat he / this pitous lettre say 809
 ful ofte he seyde / Allas and weylaway
 Lord crist quod he / how may this world endure
 So ful of synne / is many a creature 812

¶ O myghty god / if that it be thy wille
 Sith thou art rightful Iuge / how may it be
 That thou wolt suffren / Innocentz to spille
 And wikked folk / regnen in prosperitee 816
 O goode Custance / Allas so wo is me
 That I moot be thy tormentour or deye
 On shames deeth / ther is noon oother weye 819

¶ Wepen bothe yonge and olde / in al that place
 Whan þat the kyng^t this cursed lettre sente
 And Custance / with a deedly pale face
 The ferthe day / toward the shiþ she wente 823
 But natheles / she taketh in good entente
 The wyl of Crist^t and knelynge on the Stronde
 She seyde lord / ay wel come be thy sonde 826

He that me kepte / fro the false blame [leaf 63]
 While I was / on the lond amonges yow
 He kan me kepe / from harm / and eek fro shame
 In salte see / al thogh I se noight how 830
 As strong as euere he was / he is yet now
 In hym triste I / and in his mooder deere
 That is to me / my seyl / and eek my steere 833

Hir litel child / lay wepyng^t in hir arm
 And knelynge / pitously / to hym she seyde
 Pees litel sone / I wol do thee noon harm
 With that hir couerchief / ouer hir heed she breyde 837
 And ouer hise litel eyen / she it leyde
 And in hir Arm / she lulleth it ful faste
 And in to heuene / hire eyen vp she caste 840

¶ Mooder quod she / and mayde bright Marie
 Sooth is / that thurgh wommanes eggement^t
 Man kynde was lorn / and damned ay to dye
 ffor which thy child / was on a croys yrent 844
 Thy blisful eyen / sawe al his torment^t
 Thanne is ther / no comparison bitwene
 Thy wo / and any wo / man may sustene 847

Thow sawe thy child yslayn bifore thyne eyen
 And yet now / lyueth my child parfay
 Now lady bright / to whom alle woful cryen
 Thow glorie of wommanhede / thow faire may 851

Thow hauen of refut' brighte sterre of day
 Rewe on my child / that of thy gentillesse
 Ruest' on euery reweful in distresse 854

¶ O litel child / allas what is thy gilt
 That neuere wroghtest synne / as yet pardee
 Why wil thyn harde fader / han thee spilt'
 O mercy deere Constable quod she 858

As lat my litel child / dwelle heer with thee
 And if thou darst nat' sauen hym for blame
 Yet kys hym ones / in his fadres name 861

Ther with / she looked / bakward to the londe
 And seyde / fare wel housbonde routheless
 And vp she rist / and walketh doun the stronde
 Toward the Ship / hir folweth al the pees 865
 And euere she preyeth hire child / to holde his pees
 And taketh hir leue / and with an hooly entente
 She blissed hire / and in to ship she wente 868

Vitailled was the ship / it is no drede [leaf 63, back]
 Habundantly / for hire ful longe space
 And othere necessaries / that sholde nede
 She hadde ynogh / heryed be goddes grace 872
 ffor wynd and weder / almyghty god purchace
 And brynge hire hoom / I kan no better seye
 But in the see / she dryueth forth hir weye 875

¶ Explicit secunda pars

¶ Sequitur pars tercia

Alla the kyng / comth hoom soone after this
 Vn to his Castel / of the which I tolde
 And asketh / where his wyf / and his child is
 The Constable / gan aboute his herte colde 879

And pleynly / al the manere he hym tolde
 As ye han herd / I kan telle it no better
 And sheweth the kyng^t his seel and his lettre 882

And seyde / lord / as ye comanded me
 Vp peyne of deeth / so haue I doon *certein*
 This Messenger / tormented was til he
 Moste biknowe / and tellen plat and pleyn 886
 ffro nyght to nyght / in what place he had leyn
 And thus by wit / and subtil enquerynge
 Ymaged was / by whom this harm gan sprynge 889

¶ The hand was knowe / that the lettre wroot^t
 And all the venym / of this cursed dede
 But in what wise / *certeinly* I noot^t
 Theffect is this / þat Alla out of drede 893
 His mooder slow / that may men pleynly rede
 ffor þat she traitoure was to hire ligeance
 Thus endeth olde Donegild^t with meschance 896

The sorwe that this Alla / nyght and day
 Maketh for his wyf / and for his child also
 Ther is no tonge / that it telle may
 But now wol I / vn to Custance go 900
 That fleteth in the see / in peyne and wo
 ffyue yeer and moore / as liked cristes sonde
 Er that hir shiþ / approached vn to the londe 903

¶ Vnder an hethen Castel / atte laste [leaf 64]
 Of which the name / in my text nocht I fynde
 Custance / and eek hir child / the see vp caste
 Almyghty god / that saued al mankynde 907
 Haue on Custance / and on hir child som mynde
 That fallen is / in hethen hand eft soone
 In point to spille / as I shal telle yow soone 910

¶ Doun fro the Castel / comth ther many a wight
 To gauren on this shiḗ / and on Custance
 But shortly / from the Castel / on a nyght
 The lordes styward^t / god yeue him meschance 914
 A thief / that hadde reneyed oure creance
 Came in to the shiḗ allone / and seyde he sholde
 Hir lemman be / wher so she wolde or nolde 917

¶ Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon
 Hir child cride / and she cride pitously
 But blisful Marie / heelp hire right anon
 ffor with hir struglyng^t wel and myghtily 921
 The thief fil ouer bord / al sodeynly
 And in the see / he dreynte for vengeance
 And thus hath crist^t vnwemmed kept Custance 924

O foule lust of luxurie / lo thyn ende Auctor.
 Nat oonly / that thou feyntest mannes mynde [Latin note,
p. 133.]
 But verraily / thou wolt his body shende
 Thende of thy werk^t or of thy lustes blynde 928
 Is compleynyng^t hou many oon may men fynde
 That noight for werk som tyme / but for thentente
 To doon this synne / been outhere slayn or shente 931

How may this wayke womman / han this strengthe
 Hire to defende / agayn this renegat^t
 O Goliath / vnmesurable of lengthe
 Hou myghte Dauid / make thee so maat^t 935
 So yong^t and of Armure so desolaat
 Hou dorste he looke / vp on thy dredful face
 Wel may men seen / it nas but goddes grace 938

Who yaf Iudith / corage or hardynesse
 To sleen hym Oloferne / in his tente
 And to deliueren / out of wrecchednesse
 The peple of god / I seye for this entente 942

That riȝht as god / spirit of vigour sente
 To hem / and saued hem / out of meschance
 So sente he myȝht' and vigour to Custance 945

¶ fforth gooth hir shiþ / thurgh out the narwe mouth [if 64. bk]
 Of Iubaltare and Septe dryuyng alway
 Som tyme West' and som tyme North' and South'
 And som tyme est' ful many a wery day 949
 Til cristes mooder / blessed be she ay
 Hath shapen / thurgh hir endeless goodnesse
 To make an ende / of al hir heynesse 952

Now lat vs stynte / of Custance but a throwe
 And speke we / of the Romayn Emperour
 That out of Surrye / hath by lettres knowe
 The slaughtre of cristen folk / and dishonour 956
 Doon to his doghter / by a fals traytour
 I mene / the cursed wikked Sowdanesse
 That at the feeste / leet sleen both moore *and* lesse 959

ffor which this Emperour / hath sent anon
 His senatour / with roial ordinance
 And othere lordes / god woot many oon
 On Surryens / to taken heigh vengeance 963
 They brennen / sleen / and bryng hem to meschance
 Ful many a day / but shortly / this is thende
 Homward to Rome / they shapen hem to wende 966

¶ This senatour / repaireth with victorie
 To Rome ward' saillynge ful Roially
 And mette the shiþ dryuyng / as seith the storie
 In which Custance / sit ful pitously 970
 No thyng knew he / what she was / ne why?
 She was in swich array / ne she nyl seye/
 Of hire estaat' thogh' she sholde deye 973

He bryngeth hire to Rome / and to his wyf/
 He yaf hire / and hir yonge sone also
 And with the senatour / she ladde hir lyf
 Thus kan oÛre lady / bryngen out of wo 977
 Woful Custance / and many another mo
 And longe tyme / dwelled she in that place
 In hooly werkes euere / as was hir grace 980

The senatours wyf / hir Aunte was
 But for all that she knew hire neuer the moore
 I wol no lenger / tarien in this cas
 But to kyng Alla / which I spake of yoore 984
 That wepeth for his wyf / and siketh soore
 I wol retourne / and lete I wol Custance
 Vnder / the Senatours gouernance 987

K yng Alla / which that hadde his mooder slayn [leaf 65]
 Vp on a day fil in swich repentance
 That if I / shortly / tellen shal and playn
 To Rome he comth / to receyuen his penance 991
 And putte hym / in the popes ordinance
 In heigh and logh / and Ihesu crist bisoghte
 fforyeue / hise wikked werkes þat he wroghte 994

¶ The fame anon / thurgh out the toun is born
 How Alla kyng / shal comen on pilgrymage
 By herbergeours / that wenten hym biforn
 ffor which / the Senatour / as was vsage 998
 Rood hym agayns / and many of his lynage
 As wel to shewen / his heighe magnificence
 As to doon / any kyng a reuerence 1001

¶ Greet cheere / dooth this noble Senatour
 To kyng Alla / and he to hym also
 Euerich of hem / dooth oother greet honour
 And so bifel / that in with a day or two 1005

This Senatour / is to kyng Alla go
 To feste / and shortly / if I shal nat'lye
 Custances sone / wente in his compaignye 1008

¶ Som men wolde seyn / at requeste of Custance
 This Senatour / hath lad this child to feeste
 I may nat tellen / euery circumstance
 Be as be may / ther was he at the leeste 1012
 But sooth is this / that at his moodres heeste
 Biforn Alla / duryng the metes space
 The child stood / lookyng in the kynges face 1015

¶ This Alla kyng' hath of this child greet wonder
 And to the senatour / he seyde anon
 Whos is that faire child / that stondest yonder?
 I noot quod he / by god / and by seint Iohn 1019
 A mooder he hath / but fader hath he noon
 That I of woot' but shortly / in a stounde
 He tolde Alla / how that' this child was founde 1022

But god woot' quod this senatour also
 So vertuous a lyuere in my lyf
 Ne saugh I neuere as she / ne herde of mo
 Of worldly women / mayde ne of wyf' 1026
 I dar wel seyn / hir hadde leuere a knyf'
 Thurgh out hir brest' than ben a womman wikke
 There is no man / koude bryng hire to that prikke 1029

¶ Now was this child' / as lyke vn to Custance [leaf 65, back]
 As possible is / a creature to be
 This Alla / hath the face in remembrance
 Of dame Custance / and ther on mused he 1033
 If that the childes mooder / were aught she
 That is his wyf / and pryuely he sighte
 And spedde hym fro the table / that he myghte 1036

Parfay thoghte he / fantome is in myn heed
 I oghte deme / of skilful Iuggement^t
 That in the salte see / my wyf is deed
 And afterward / he made his Argument 1040
 What woot I / if that Crist haue hyder ysent^t
 My wyf by see / as wel as he hire sente
 To my contree / fro thennes that she wente 1043

And after Noon / hoom with the Senatour
 Goth Alla / for to seen this wonder chaunce
 This Senatour / dooth Alla greet honour
 And hastify / he sente after Custaunce 1047
 But trusteth weel / hire liste nat to daunce
 Whan þat she wiste / wherfore was that sonde
 Vnnethe / vp on hir feet^t she myghte stonde 1050

¶ Whan Alla saugh^h his wyf^t faire he hire grette
 And weep[̄] / that it was routhe for to see
 ffor at the firste look^t he on hire sette
 He knew wel verrailly / that it was she 1054
 And she for sorwe / as doumb stant as a tree
 So was hir herte shet^t in hir distresse
 Whan she remembred / his vnkyndenesse 1057

Twyes she swowned / in his owene sighte
 He weep[̄] / and hym excuseth pitously
 Now god quod he / and hise halwes brighte
 So wisly on my soule / as hauc mercy 1061
 That of youre harm / as giltles am I
 As is Maurice my sone / so lyk youre face
 Elles the feend / me feeche out of this place 1064

¶ Long was the sobbyng^t / and the bitter peyne
 Er that / hir woful hertes myghte cesse
 Greet was the pitee / for to heere hem pleyne
 Thurgh^h whiche pleintes / gan hir wo encesse 1068

I pray yow alle / my labour to relese
 I may nat-telle hir wo / vn til to morwe
 I am so wery / for to speke of sorwe 1071

But finally / whan that the sothe is wist [leaf 66]
 That Alla giltles / was of hir wo
 I trowe / an hundred tymes / been they kist'
 And swich a blisse / is ther bitwix hem two 1075
 That saue the ioye / that lasteth eueremo
 Ther is noon lyk / that any creature
 Hath seyn or / shal / whil þat the world may dure 1078

The preyde she hir housbonde mekely
 In relief / of hir longe pitous pyne
 That he wolde preye / hir fader specially
 That of his magestee / he wolde enclyne 1082
 To vouche sauf / som day with hym to dyne
 She preyde hym eek / he wolde by no weye
 Vn to hir fader / no word of hire seye 1085

¶ Som men wold seyn / how þat the child Maurice
 Dooth this Message / vn to this Emperour
 But as I gesse / Alla was nat so nyce
 To hym that was / of so souereyn honour 1089
 As he that is / of cristen folk the flour
 Sente any child / but it is bet to deeme
 He wente hym self / and so it may wel seeme 1092

¶ This Emperour / hath graunted gentilly
 To come to dyner / as he hym bisoughte
 And wel rede I / he looked bisily
 Vp on this child / and on his doghter thoghte 1096
 Alla goth to his In / and as him oghte
 Arrayed for this feste / in euery wise
 As ferforth / as his konnyng^e may suffice 1099

¶ The morwe cam / and Alla gan hym dresse
 And eek his wyf / this Emperour to meete
 And forth they ryde / in ioye and in gladnesse
 And whan she saugh / hir fader in the strete 1103
 She lighte down / and falleth hym to feete
 ffader quod she / youre yonge child Custance
 Is now ful clene / out of youre remembrance 1106

I am youre doghter / Custance quod she
 That whilom / ye han sent / vn to Surreye
 It am I fader / that in the salte see
 Was put allone / and dampned for to dye 1110
 Now goode fader / mercy I yow crye
 Sende me namoore / vn to noon hethenesse
 But thonketh my lord heere / of his kyndenesse 1113

¶ Who kan / the pitous ioye / tellen al [leaf 66, back]
 Bitwixe hem thre / syn they been thus ymette
 But of my tale / make an ende I shal
 The day goth faste / I wol no lenger lette 1117
 This glade folk / to dyner they hem sette
 In ioye and blisse / at mete I lete hem dwelle
 A thousand foold / wel moore than I kan telle 1120

¶ This child Maurice / was sithen Emperour
 Maad by the pope / and lyued cristenly
 To cristes chirche / he dide greet honour
 But I lete all his storie passen by 1124
 Of Custance / is my tale specially
 In the olde Romane geestes / may men fynde
 Maurices lyf / I bere it noght in mynde 1127

¶ This kyng Alla / whan he his tyme say
 With his Custance / his hooly wyf so sweete
 To Engelonð / been they come the righte way
 Wher as they lyue / in ioye and in quiete 1131

But litel while it lasteth / I yow heete [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Ioye of this world / for tyme wol nat abyde
 ffro day to nyght / it changeth as the tyde 1134

Who lyued euere / in swich delit o day [Latin note, p. 133.]
 That hym ne moeued / outhur conscience
 Or Ire / or talent^r or som kynnes affray
 Enuye / or pride / or passion / or offence 1138
 I ne seye but for this ende this sentence
 That litel while in ioye / or in plesance
 Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance 1141

ffor deeth / that taketh / of heighⁿ and logh / his rente
 Whan passed was a yeer / euene as I gesse
 Out of this world / this kyng Alla he hente
 For whom / Custance / hath ful greet heuynesse 1145
 Now lat vs praye to god / his soule blesse
 And dame Custance / finally to seye
 Toward the toun of Rome / goth hir weye 1148

¶ To Rome is come / this hooly creature
 And fyndeth hire freendes / hoole and sounde
 Now is she scaped / al hire auenture
 And whan þat she / hir fader hath yfounde 1152
 Doun on hir knees / falleth she to grounde
 Wepyng for tendrenesse / in herte blithe
 She heryeth god / an hundred thousand sithe 1155

¶ In vertu / and hooly almus dede [leaf 67]
 They lyuen alle / and neuere a sonder wende
 Till deeth departed hem / this lyf they lede
 And fareth now weel / my tale is at an ende 1159
 Now Ihesu Crist that of his myght may sende
 Ioye after wo / gouerne vs in his grace
 And kepe vs alle / that been in this place Amen 𐀀 1162

¶ Heere endeth the tale / of the man of Lawe 𐀀


[The Wife of Bath's Prologue follows in the MS.]

GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

§ 1. WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

ELLESMERE MS.

[on leaf 67]

¶ The Prologe / of the Wyues tale of Bathe 

Experience / though noon Auctoritee
 Were in this world / were right ynogh to me
 To speke of wo / that is in mariage
 ffor lordynges / sith I .xij. yeer was of Age 4
 Ythonked be god / that is eterne on lyue
 Housbondes at chirche dore I haue had fyue
 ffor I so ofte / haue ywedded bee
 And alle / were worthy men in hir degree 8
 But me was toold *certeyn* / nat longe agoon is
 That sith that Crist' ne wente *neuere* but onis
 To weddyng' in the Cane of Galilee
 ¶ In Cana Galilee
 By the same / ensample / thoughte me 12
 That I ne sholde / wedded be but ones
 ¶ Qui enim semel
 iuit ad nupcias /
 docuit semel esse
 nubendum
 Herkne eek / which a sharpe word for the nones
 Beside a welle / Ihesus god and man
 Spak / in repreue of the Samaritan 16
 Thou hast yhad / fyue housbondes quod he
 And that man / the which *pat* hath now thee
 Is noghit thyn housbonde / thus seyde he *certeyn*
 What that he mente ther by / I kan nat seyn 20
 But *pat* I axe / why that the fifthe man
 Was noon housbonde to the samaritan
 How manye / myghte she haue in mariage
 Yet herde I *neuere* tellen in myn age 24

¶ Non est vxorum
 numerus
 difficultas:

quia secundum
Paulum / Qui
habent vxores sic
sint tanquam non
habentes

¶ Creseite &
multiplicamini

Vpon this nombre diffinicioun

Men may deuyne / and glosen vp and doun

But wel I woot' expres with-oute lye

God bad vs / for to wexe and multiplie 28

That gentil text' kan I [wel] vnderstonde

Eek wel I woot' he seyde myn housbonde

Sholde lete fader and mooder / and take me

But of no nombre / mencion made he 32

Of bigamye / or of Octogamye

[leaf 67, back]

Why sholde men / speke of it vileynye

¶ Lo heere^{and} / the wise kyng' dann salomon

I trowe / he hadde wyues / mo than oon 36

As wolde god / it were leueful vn-to me

To be refresshed / half so ofte as he

Which yifte of God / hadde he / for alle hise wyuys

No man hath swich / þat in this world alyue is 40

God woot / this noble kyng' as to my wit

The firste nyght' had many a myrie fit

With ech of hem / so wel was hym on lyue

Yblessed be god / that I haue wedded fyue 44

Welcome the sixte / whan that euere he shal

ffor sothe / I wol nat kepe me chaast in al

Whan myn housbonde / is fro the world ygon

Som cristen man / shal wedde me anon 48

ffor thanne / thapostle seith / I am free

To wedde a goddes half' where¹ it liketh¹ me [¹-¹ on an erasure]

He seith / to be wedded / is no synne

Bet is / to be wedded / than to brynne 52

What rekketh me / thogh folk seye vileynye

Of shrewed lameth / and of bigamye

I woot wel / Abraham / was an hooly man

And Iacob eek' / as ferforth as I kan 56

And ech of hem / hadde wyues mo than two

And many another man Also

Whanne saugh ye euere / in [any] manere Age

That hye god / defended mariage 60

¶ Si autem non
continent/
nubant/

¶ Quod si dormie-
rit vir eius liberata
est / cui vult nubat
in Domino

¶ Si acceperis
vxorem non
peccasti / et si
nupserit virgo
non peccauit / set
hij qui domino se
vouerunt Ita
idem &c

¶ Melius est
nubere quam vri
¶ Lameth qui
primus intrauit
bigamiam /
sanguinarius &
homicida est &c.

¶ Abraham
trigamus
¶ Iacob quadri-
gamus

By expres word / I pray you telleth me	
Or where / comanded he virginitee	
I woot as wel as ye / it is no drede	
Whan tha postel / speketh of maydenhede	64
He seyde / that precept ther-of hadde he noon	
Men may conseille / a womman to been oon	
But conseillyng is nat comandement	
He putte it in oure owene Iuggement	68
ffor hadde god / comanded maydenhede	
Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng with the dede	
And certain / if ther were / no seed y-sowe	
Virginitee / wher-of thanne sholde it growe	72
Poul / ne dorste nat / comanden atte leeste	
A thyng of which his maister yaf noon heeste	
The dart is set vp / of virginitee	
Cacche who so may / who renneth best lat see	76
¶ But this word / is nat taken of euery wight	
But ther / as god lust gyue it of his myght	
I woot wel / the Apostel was a mayde	
But natheles / thogh / that he wroot and sayde	80
He wolde / þat euery wight / were swich as he	[leaf 68]
Al nys / but conseil to virginitee	¶ Volo autem omnes homines esse sicut me ipsum
And for to been a wyf / he yaf me leue	
Of Indulgence / so it is no repreue	84
To wedde me / if my make dye	
With outen / excepcion of Bigamye	
Al were it good / no womman for to touche	
He mente / as in his bed / or in his couche	88
ffor peril is / bothe fyr and tow tassemble	¶ Bonum est homini / mulierem non tangere
Ye knowe / what this ensample may resemble	
This is al and som / that virginitee	
Moore profiteth / than weddyng / in freletee	92
ffreeltee clepe I / but if that he and she	
Wolde lede / al hir lyf in chastitee	
¶ I graunte it wel / I haue noon envie	
Thogh maydenhede preferre Bigamye	96

Hem liketh to be clene / body and goost'
 Of myn estaat I nyl nat make no boost'
 ffor wel ye knowe / a lord in his houshold
 He nath nat euery vessel / al of gold 100
 Somme been of tree / and doon hir lord seruyse
 God clepeth folk to hym / in sondry wyse
 And euerich hath of god a propre yifte
 Som this som that' as hym liketh shifte 104
 ¶ Virginitee / is greet perfeccion
 And continence eek' with deuocion
 But crist/ that of perfeccion is welle
 Bad nat euery wight / sholde go selle 108
 All that he hadde / and gyue it to the poore
 And in swich wise / folwe hym and his foore
 He spak to hem / that wolde lyue parfitly
 And lordynges by youre leue / that am nat I 112
 I wol bistowe / the flour of myn age
 In the Actes and in fruyt of mariage
 ¶ Telle me also / to what conclusion
 Were membres ymaad / of generacion 116
 And for what profit was a wight ywroght'
 Trusteth right wel / they were nat maad for noght
 Glose who so wole / and seye bothe vp and down
 That they were maad / for purgacioun 120
 Of vryne bothe / and thynges smale
 And eek to knowe / a femele from a male
 And for noon oother cause / sey ye no ?
 The experience / woot wel it is noght so 124
 So that the clerkes / be nat with me wrothe
 I sey yis / that they beth maked for bothe
 This is to seye / for office and for ese
 Of engendrure / ther we nat god displese 128
 Why sholde men elles / in hir bookes sette [leaf 68, back]
 That a man shal yelde / to his wyf hire dette
 Now wher with / sholde he make his paiement'
 If he ne vsed / his sely Instrument 132

¶ Vnusquisque
 proprium habet
 donum ex deo:
 alius quidem sic/
 alius autem sic/

¶ Qui cantant
 sequentur Agnum
 xiiiiijor Millia

- Thanne were they maad / vp-on a creature
 To purge vryne / and for engendrure
 ¶ But I seye noght^t þat euery wight is holde 136
 That hath swich harneys / as I of tolde
 To goon and vsen hem in engendrure
 They shul nat take / of chastitee no cure
 Crist was a mayde / and shapen as a man
 And many a seint^t sith the world bigan 140
 Yet lyued they euere / in *perfit* chastitee
 I nyl nat enuye / no virginitee
 Lat hem be breed / of pured whete seed
 And lat vs wyues / hoten barly breed 144
 And yet^t with barly breed / Mark telle kan
 Oure lord / refreshed many a man
 In swich estaat^t as god hath cleped vs
 I wol perseuere / I nam nat *precius* 148
 In wyfhode I wol vse myn Instrument/
 As frely / as my makere hath it sent^t
 If I be daungerous / god yeue me sorwe
 Myn housbonde shal it haue / bothe eue *and* morwe 152
 Whan þat hym list^t com forth *and* paye his dette
 An housbonde I wol haue / I nyl nat lette
 Which shal be / bothe my dettour / and my thral
 And haue / his tribulacion^o with al 156
 Vp-on his fless^h / whil that I am his wyf/
 I haue the power / durynge al my lyf^t
 Vp-on his *propre* body / and noght he
 Right thus / the Apostel / tolde it vn-to me 160
 And bad oure housbondes / for to loue vs weel
 Al this sentence / me liketh euery deel
Vp stirte the Pardonere / and that anon
 Now dame quod he / by god *and* by seint Iohn 164
 Ye been a noble prechour in this cas
 I was aboute / to wedde a wyf allas
 What sholde I bye it^t on my fless^h so deere
 Yet hadde I leuere / wedde no wyf to yeere 168

¶ *Ea vocacione
qua vocati estis &
cetera*

¶ *Qui vxorem
habet & debitor
dicitur. & esse in
prepuccio & seruus
vxoris & qui
malorum seruo-
rum est alligatus*

¶ *Et iterum
seruus vxoris es /
noli propter hoc
habere tristiciam
¶ Item si acceperis
vxorem non
peccasti tribula-
cionem tamen
carnis habebunt
huiusmodi &
cetera*

¶ *Item vir
corporis sui non
habet potestatem
set vxor*

¶ Item viri diligite
uxores verecundas

- ¶ Abyde quod she / my tale is nat bigonne
Nay / thou shalt drynken of another tonne
Er that I go / shal sauoure wors than Ale
And whan þat I / haue toold forth my tale 172
Of tribulacion / that is in mariage
Of which / I am expert in al myn age
This to seyn / my self haue been the whippe
Than maystow chese / wheither thou wolt sippe 176
Of that tonne / that I shal abroche [leaf 69]
Be war of it / er thou to ny approche
ffor I shal tell ensamples / mo than ten
Who so / þat wol nat be war / by othere men 180
By hym / shul othere men corrected be
The same wordes / writeth Protholomee
Rede it in his Almageste / and take it there
¶ Dame / I wolde praye / if youre wyl it were 184
Seyde this Pardoner / as ye bigan
Telle forth youre tale / spareth for no man
And teche vs yonge men / of youre praktike
¶ Gladly sires / sith it may yow like 188
But yet I praye / to al this campaignye
If that I speke / after my fantasye
As taketh not agrief / that I seye
ffor myn entente / is but for to pleye 192
- ¶ Bihoold how
this goode wyf /
serued hir .iij.
firste housbondes
whiche were goode
olde men
- N**OW sire / now wol I telle forth my tale
As euere / moote I drynken wyn or Ale
I shal seye sooth / of the housbondes þat I hadde 196
As thre of hem were goode / and two were badde
The thre men / were goode / and riche / and olde
Vnnethe / myghite they / the statut holde
In which / that they were / bounden vn-to me
Ye woot wel / what I meene of this pardee 200
As help me god / I laughe whan I thynke
How pitously / anyght I made hem swynke
And by my fey / I tolde of it no stoor
They had me yeuen hir gold / and hir tresoor 204

¶ Ierephancias
quique
Athienicum /
vsque hodie /
cicute sorbicione
castrari

Me neded nat / do lenger diligence
 To wynne hir loue / or doon hem reuerence
 They loued me so wel / by god aboute
 That I ne tolde / no deyntee of hir loue 208
 A wys womman / wol sette hire euere in oon
 To gete hire loue / ther as she hath noon
 But sith I hadde hem / hoolly in myn hond
 And sith / they hadde / me yeuen all hir lond 212
 What sholde I taken heede / hem for to plesse
 But it were / for my profit and myn ese
 I sette hem so a werk / by my fey
 That many a nyght they songen weilaway 216
 The bacon / was nat fet for hem I trowe
 That som men han / in Essex at Dunmowe
 I gouerned hem / so wel after my lawe
 That ech of hem / was ful blisful and fawe 220
 To brynge me / gaye thynges / fro the ffayre
 They were ful glad / whan I spak to hem faire
 ffor god it woot / I chidde hem spitously
 ¶ Now herkneth / hou I baar me proprely 224
 Ye wise wyues / that kan vnderstonde [leaf 69, back]
 ¶ Thus shul ye speke / and beren hem on honde
 ffor half so boldely / kan ther no man
 Swere and lye / as kan a womman 228
 I sey nat this / by wyues þat been wyse
 But if it be / whan they hem mysauyse
 A wys wyf / if that she kan hir good
 Shal bere hym on hond / the Cow is wood 232
 And take wisse / of hir owene mayde
 Of hir assent but herkneth how I sayde
 ¶ Sire olde kaynard / is this thyn array
 Why is / my neighebores wyf so gay 236
 She is honoured / ouer al ther she gooth
 I sitte at hoom / I haue no thrifty clooth
 What dostow / at my neighebores hous
 Ie she so fair / artow so amorous 240

What rowne ye with oure mayde benedicite
 Sire olde lecchour / lat thy Iapes be
 And if I haue / a gossib or a freend
 With-outen gilt^t thou chidest as a feend 244
 If that I walke / or pleye yn-to his hous
 Thou comest hoom / as dronken as a Mous
 And prechest on thy bench / with yuel preef
 Thou seist to me / it is a greet meschief 248
 To wedde a poure womman for costage
 And if she be riche / and of heighⁿ parage
 Thanne seistow / it is a tormentrie
 To soffren hire pride / and hire malencolie 252
 And if that she be fair / thou verray knaue
 Thou seyst^t that euery holour wol hire haue
 She may no while / in chastitee abyde
 That is assailed / vp-on ech a syde 256
 ¶ Thou seyst^t that som folk / desiren vs / for richesse
 Somme for oure shape / somme for oure fairnesse
 And som / for she kan synge and daunce
 And som for gentillesse / and som for daliaunce 260
 Som for hir handes / and hir Armes smale
 Thus goth al to the deu^el / by thy tale
 Thou seyst^t men may nat kepe a Castel wal
 It may so longe / assailed been ouer al 264
 ¶ And if that she be foul / thou seist that she
 Coueiteth euery man / that she may se
 ffor as a spaynel / she wol on hym lepe
 Til þat she fynde / som man hire to chepe 268
 Ne noon so grey goos gooth in the lake
 As seistow / wol been with-oute make
 And seyst^t it is an hard thyng^t for to welde
 A thyng^t þat no man wole his thankes helde 272
 Thus seistow lorel / whan thow goost^t to bedde [leaf 70]
 And þat no wys man / nedeth for to wedde
 Ne no man / that entendeth vn-to heuene
 With wilde thonder dynt^t and firy leuene 276

- Moote / thy welked nekke be to-broke
 ¶ Thow seyst^t that droppynge houses / *and* eek smoke
 And chidyng^t wyues / maken men to flee
 Out of hir owene houses / a benedicitee 280
 What cyleth / swich an old man for to chide
 ¶ Thow seyst^t þat we wyues / wol oure vices hide
 Til we be fast^t and thanne we wol hem shewe
 Wel may that be / a *prouerbe* of a shrewe 284
 ¶ Thou seist^t þat Oxen / Asses / hors / and houndes
 They been assayd / at diuerse stoundes
 Bacyns / lauours / er that men hem bye
 Spoones and stooles / and al swich housbondrye 288
 And so been / pottes clothes / and array
 But folk^t of wyues / maken noon assay
 Til they be wedded / olde dotard shrewe
 Thanne seistow / we wol oure vices shewe 292
 ¶ Thou seist^t also / that it displeseth me
 But if that thou / wolt preyse my beautee
 And but thou poure alwey / vp-on my face.
 And clepe me faire dame in euery place 296
 And but thou make a feeste / on thilke day
 That I was born / and make me fressh *and* gay
 And but thou do / to my norice honour
 And to my chambrere / with-Inne my bour 300
 And to my fadres folk / and,hise allyes
 Thus seistow / olde barel ful of lyes
 ¶ And yet^t of oure Apprentice / Ianekyn
 ffor his criske heer / shynynge as gold so fyn 304
 And for he squiereth me / bothe vp and doun
 Yet hastow caught^t a fals suspecioun
 I wol hym noght / thogh thou were deed tomorwe
 ¶ But tel me / why hydestow with sorwe 308
 The keyes of my cheste / away fro me
 It is my good / as wel as thyn *pardee*
 What wenestow / to make an ydiot^t of oure dame
 Now by that lord / that called is seint Iame 312

¶ Et procurator
 calamistratus &
 cetera

Thou shalt nat bothe / thogh thou were wood
 Be maister / of my body / and of my good
 That oon thou shalt forgo / maugree thyne eyen
 What nedeth thee / of me / to enquere or spyen 316
 I trowe / thou woldest' loke me in thy chiste
 Thou sholdest seye / wyf go wher thee liste
 Taak youre disport' I wol leue no talys
 I knowe yow / for a trewe wyf dame Alys 320
 We loue no man / that taketh kepe / or charge [leaf 70, back]
 Wher that we goon / we wol ben at our large
 ¶ Of alle men / blessed moot he be
 The wise Astrologien / Daun Protholome 324
 That seith this prouerbe / in his Almageste
 Of alle men / his wysdom is the hyeste
 That rekketh neuere / who hath the world in honde
 By this prouerbe / thou shalt vnderstonde 328
 Haue thou ynogh / what thar thee recche or care
 How myrily / that othere folkes fare
 ffor *certeyn* / olde dotard by youre leue
 Ye shul haue queynte / right ynogh at eue 332
 He is to greet a nygard / that wolde werne
 A man / to lighte his candle at his lanterne
 He shal haue / neuer the lasse light *pardee*
 Haue thou ynogh / thee thar nat pleyne thee 336
 ¶ Thou seyst also / þat if we make vs gay
 With clothyng' and with *precious* array
 That' it is *peril* of oure chastitee
 And yet with sorwe / thou most enforce thee 340
 And seye these wordes / in the Apostles name
 In habit maad / with chastitee and shame
 Ye wommen / shul apparaille yow quod he
 And noght' in tressed heer / and gay perree 344
 As perles / ne with gold / ne clothes riche
 After thy text' ne after thy Rubriche
 I wol nat wirche / as muchel as a gnat'
 ¶ Thou seydest this / that I was lyk' a Cat' 348

¶ *Intra omnes
 alior existit/
 qui non curat in
 cuius manu sit
 mundus*

¶ *similiter &
 mulieres in
 habitu ornato
 cum verecundia &
 castitate ornent
 se / non in tortis
 crinibus aut auro
 aut margaritis
 siue veste preciosa
 & cetera / Hec
 Paulus*

- ffor who so wolde / senge a Cattes skyn
 Thanne wolde the Cat^t wel dwellen in his In
 And if the Cattes skyn / be slyk and gay
 She wol nat dwelle in house / half a day 352
 But forth she wole / er any day be dawed
 To shewe hir skyn / and goon a Caterwawed
 This is to seye / if I be gay sire shrewe
 I wol renne out / my borel for to shewe 356
 ¶ Sire olde fool / what eyleth thee to spyen
 Thogh thou preye Argus / *wit*h hise hundred eyen
 To be my wardecors / as he kan best/
 In feith / he shal nat kepe me but lest^t 360
 Yet koude I make his berd / so moot I thee
 ¶ Thou seydest eek / that ther been thynges thre
 The whiche thynges / troublen al this erthe
 And þat no wight / may endure the ferthe 364
 O leue sire shrewe / *Ihesu* / shorte thy lyf /
 Yet *prechestow* / and seyst and hateful wyf^t
 Yrekened is / for oon of these meschances
 Been ther none othere resemblances 368
 That ye may likne / youre parables to
 But if / a sely wyf / be oon of tho [leaf 71]
 ¶ Thou liknest^t wommenes loue to helle
 To bareyne lond / ther water may nat dwelle 372
 ¶ Thou liknest it also / to wilde fyr
 The moore it brenneth / the moore it hath desir
 To consumen euery thyng^t þat brent wole be
 Thou seyst^t. right as wormes shendeth a tree 376
 Right so a wyf / destroyeth hire housbond
 This knowe they / that been to wyues bonde
L Ordynges / right thus / as ye haue vnderstonde
 Baar I stify / myne olde housbondes on honde 380
 That thus they seyden / in hir dronkenesse
 And al was fals / but that I took witesse
 On Ianekyn / and on my Nece also
 O lord / the peyne I dide hem / and the wo 384

¶ *eciam odiosa
 vxor si habeat
 virum bonum &
 cetera*

¶ *Amor illius
 inferno & arenti
 terre & incendio
 comparata || Vnde
 illud & cetera*
 ¶ *Infernus &
 amor mulieris &
 terra que non
 saciatur aqua &
 ignis non dicunt
 satis & cetera*
 ¶ *Sicut in ligno
 vermis ita perdet
 virum suum vxor*
 ¶ *Nemo melius
 scire potest / quid
 sit vxor vel
 mulier / nisi ille
 qui passus est /*

fful gitlees / by goddes sweete pyne
 ffor as an hors / I koude byte and whyne
 I koude pleyne / thogh I were in the gilt
 Or elles / often tyme / hadde I been spilt 388
 Who so comth first to Mille / first grynt
 I pleynd first / so was oure werre y-stynt
 They were ful glad / to excusen hem blyue
 Of thyng / of which they neuere agilte hir lyue 392
 ¶ Of wenchis / wolde I beren hym on honde
 Whan that for syk' vnnethe myghite he stonde
 Yet tikled it his herte / for that he
 Wende / þat I hadde of hym so greet chiertee 396
 I swoor / þat al my walkynge out by nyghite
 Was / for tespye wenchis þat he dighte
 Vnder that colour / hadde I many a myrthe
 ffor al swich thyng' was yeuen vs in oure byrthe 400
 Deceite / wepyng' spynnyng' god hath yeue
 To wommen kyndely / whil that they may lyue
 And thus / of o thyng' I auaunte me
 Atte ende / I hadde the bettre in ech degree 404
 By sleighite / or force / or by som maner thyng'
 As by continueel murmure or grucchyng'
 Namely / abedde / hadden they meschaunce
 Ther wolde I chide / and do hem no plesaunce 408
 I wolde / no lenger in the bed abyde
 If that I felte his Arm ouer my syde
 Til he / had maad / his raunson vn-to me
 Thanne wolde I suffre hym / do his nycetee 412
 And ther-fore / euery man / this tale I telle
 Wynne who so may / for al is for to selle
 With empty hand / men may none haukes lure
 ffor wyunnyng' wolde I al his lust endure 416
 And make me / a feyned appetit/ [leaf 71, back]
 And yet' in bacon / hadde I neuere delit'
 That made me / that euere I wolde hem chide
 ffor thogh the pope / hadde seten hem biside 420

I wolde nat spare hem / at hir owene bord^þ
 ffor by my trouthe / I quitte hem word for word^þ
 As helpe me / verray god omnipotent^t
 Though I right now / sholde make my testament^t 424
 I ne owe hem nat a word / þat it nys quit
 I broghte it so aboute by my wit/
 That they moste yeue it vp / as for the beste
 Or elles / hadde we neuere been in rest 428
 ffor thogh he looked / as a wood leonⁿ
 Yet sholde he faille / of his conclusionⁿ
 ¶ Thanne wolde I seye / goode lief^t taak keepe
 How mekely / looketh Wilkyn oure sheepe 432
 Com neer my spouse / lat me ba thy cheke
 Ye sholde been / al pacient and meke
 And han / a sweete spiced conscience
 Sith ye so preche / of Iobes pacience 436
 Suffreth alwey / syn ye so wel kan preche
 And but ye do / certein we shal yow teche
 That it is fair / to haue a wyf in pees
 Oon of vs two / moste bowen doutelees 440
 And sith a man / is moore resonable
 Than womman is / ye moste been suffrable
 What eyleth yow / to grucche thus and grone
 Is it^t for ye wolde haue my queynte allone 444
 Wy taak it al / lo haue it euery deel
 Peter I shrewe yow / but ye loue it weel
 ffor if I wolde / selle my bele chose
 I koude walke / as fressh as is a rose 448
 But I wol kepe / it^t for youre owene tooth
 Ye be to blame / by god / I sey yow sooth
 ¶ Swiche manere wordes hadde we on honde
 Now wol I speken / of my fourthe housbonde 452
My fourthe housbonde / was a renelour
 This is to seyn / he hadde a paramour
 And I was yong^t and ful of ragerye
 Stibourne and strong^t and ioly as a pye 456

¶ Of the condicione of the fourthe housbonde of this goode wyf/ And how she serued hym

¶ Valerius. libro.
6º capitulo 3º ||
Metellius vxorem
suam / eo quod
vinum bibisset/
fuste percussam
interemit /

Wel koude I daunce / to an harpe smale
And synge ywis / as any nyghtyngale
¶ Whan I had dronke / a draughte of sweete wyn
Metellius / the foule cherl the swyn 460
That with a staf / birafte his wyf hire lyf
ffor she drank wyn / thogh I hadde been his wyf /
He sholde nat' han daunted me fro drynke
And after wyn / on Venus moste I thynke 464
ffor al so siker / as cold engendreth hayl [Deaf 72]
A likerous mouth / moste han a likerous tayl
In wommen vinolent / is no defence
This knowen lecchours by experience 468
¶ But lord crist / whan that it remembreth me
Vp-on my yowthe / and on my Iolitee
It tikleth me / aboute myn herte roote
Vn-to this day / it dooth myn herte boote 472
That I haue had my world / as in my tyme
But Age allas / that al wole enuynyme
Hath me biraft / my beautee / and my pith
Lat go fare wel / the deucl go therwith 476
The flour is goon / ther is namoore to telle
The bren as I best kan / now moste I selle
But yet' to be right myrie / wol I fonde
Now wol I tellen / of my fourthe housbonde 480
¶ I seye / I hadde in herte greet despit
That he / of any oother had delit'
But he was quit' by god / and by seint Iocce
I made hym / of the same wode a croce 484
Nat of my body / in no foul manere
But certein / I made folk swich cheere
That in his owene grece / I made hym frye
ffor Angre / and for verray Ialousye 488
By god / in erthe I was his purgatorie
ffor which I hope / his soule be in glorie
ffor god it woot' he sat ful ofte and song /
Whan þat his shoo / ful bitterly hym wrong' 492

- Ther was no wight^t saue god and he þat wiste
 In many wise / how soore I hym twiste
 He deyde / whan I cam fro Ierusalem
 And lith ygraue / vnder the roode beem 496
 Al is his tombe / noght so curyus
 As was the sepulcre / of hym Daryus
 Which that Appelles / wroghte subtilly
 It nys but wast^t to burye hym preciously 500
 Lat hym fare wel / god yeue his soule reste
 He is now / in his graue / and in his cheste
NOW / of my fifthe housbonde wol I telle
 God lete his soule / neuere come in helle 504
 And yet was he to me / the mooste shrewe
 That feele I / on my ribbes al by rewe
 And euere shal / vn-to myn endyng day
 But in oure bed / he was / ful fressh and gay 508
 And ther-with-al / so wel koude he me glose
 Whan that^t he wolde han my bele chose
 That thogh / he hadde me bet^t on euery bon
 He koude wynne / agayn my loue anon 512
 I trowe I loued hym best^t for that he
 Was of his loue / daungerous to me
 We wommen han / if that I shal nat lye
 In this matere / a queynte fantasye 516
 Wayte what thyng^t we may nat lightly haue
 Ther after / wol we erie / al day and craue
 fforbede vs thyng^t and that desiren we
 Preece on vs faste / and thanne wol we fle 520
 With daunger / oute we al oure chaffare
 Greet prees at Market^t maketh deere ware
 And to greet cheepe / is holde at litel prys
 This knoweth / euery womman that is wys 524
 ¶ My fifthe housbonde / god his soule blesse
 Which þat I took for loue / and no richesse
 He som tyme / was a clerk of Oxenford^t
 And hadde left scole / and wente at hom to bord^t 528

¶ Appelles / fecit
 mirabile opus in
 tumulo Darij /
 vnde in Alex-
 andro . libro . 6^o

¶ Of the fifthe
 housbonde of
 this wyf / . and
 hou she bar hire
 ayens hym

[leaf 72, back]

With my gossib / dwellynge in oure toun
 God haue hir soule / hir name was Alisoun
 She knew myn herte / and eek my priuete
 Bet than oure parisshe preest' as moot I thee 532
 To hire / biwreyed I / my conseil al
 ffor hadde myn housbonde / pissed on a wal
 Or doon a thyng' þat sholde han cost his lyf /
 To hire / and to another worthy wyf / 536
 And to my Nece / which þat I loued weel
 I wolde han toold / his conseil euery deel
 And so I dide / ful often god it woot'
 That made his face / ful often reed and hoot' 540
 ffor verray shame / and blamed hym self' for he s
 Had toold to me / so greet a pryuetee
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones in a lente
 So often tymes / I to my gossyb wente 544
 ffor euere yet' I loued to be gay
 And for to walke / in March / Aueriþ and May
 ffro hous to hous / to heere sondry talys
 That Iankyn Clerk' and my gossyb dame Alys 548
 And I my self / in-to the feeldes wente
 Myn housbonde / was at London al the lente
 I hadde / the bettre leysur for to pleye
 And for to se / and eek' for to be seye 552
 Of lusty folk' what wiste I / wher my grace
 Was shapen for to be / or in what place
 Therefore / I made my visitacioñs
 To vigilies / and to processioñs 556
 To prechyng' eek' and to thise pilgrimages
 To pleyes of myracles / and to mariages
 And wered vpon / my gaye scarlet gytes
 Thise wormes / ne thise Motthes / ne thise mytes 560
 Vpon my peril / frete hem neuer a deel [leaf 73]
 And wostow why? for they were vsed weel
Now wol I tellen forth / what happed me
 I seye / that in the feeldes walked we 564

Till trewely / we hadde swich daliance
 This clerk and I / that of my purueiance
 I spak to hym / and seyde hym / how þat he ^s
 If I were wydwe / sholde wedde me 568
 ffor *certainly* / I sey for no bobance
 Yet was I neuere / with-outen purueiance
 Of mariage / nof othere thynges eek
 I holde a Mouses herte / nat worth a leek/ 572
 That hath but oon hole / for to sterte to
 And if þat faille / thanne is al ydo
 ¶ I bar hym on honde / he hadde enchanted me
 My dame taughte me that soutiltee 576
 And eek I seyde / I mette of hym al nyght
 He wolde han slayn me / as I lay vp right
 And al my bed / was ful of verray blood
 But yet I hope / that he shal do me good 580
 ffor blood / bitokeneth gold / as me was taught
 And al was fals / I dremed of it right naught
 But I folwed ay / my dammes loore
 As wel of this / as of othere thynges moore 584
 ¶ But now sire / lat me se / what I shal seyn
 A / ha / by god / I haue my tale ageyn
 ¶ Whan þat my fourthe housbonde / was on beere
 I weepe algate / and made sory cheere 588
 As wyues mooten / for it is vsage
 And with my couerchief / couered my visage
 But for þat I / was purueyed of a make
 I wepte but smal / and that I vndertake 592
 ¶ To chirche / was myn housbonde / born a morwe
 With neighebores / that for hym maden sorwe
 And Iankyn oure Clerk / was oon of tho
 As help me god / whan þat I saugh hym go 596
 After the beere / me thoughte he hadde a paire ^s
 Of legges / and of feet / so clene and faire
 That al myn herte / I yaf vn-to his hoold
 He was I trowe / a twenty wynter oold 600

	And I was fourty / if I shal seye sooth	
	But yet I hadde alwey / a coltes tooth	
	Gat tothed I was / and that bicam me weel	
	I hadde the prente / of seint Venus seel	604
	As help me god / I was a lusty oon	
	And faire and riche / and yong ^r and wel bigon	
	And trewely / as myne housbondes tolde me	
	I hadde the beste Quonyam myghte be	608
	ffor certes / I am al Venerien	[leaf 73, back]
	In feelynge / and myn herte is Marcien	
	Venus me yaf my lust ^r my likerousnesse	
	And Mars yaf me / my sturdy hardynesse	612
	Myn Ascendent was Taur and Mars ther-Inne	
	Allas / allas / þat euere loue was synne	
	I folwed ay / myn Inclinaciõ	
	By vertu / of my constellaciõ	616
	That made me / I koude nocht withdrawe	
	My chambre of Venus / from a good felawe	
	Yet haue I / Martes Mark vp-on my face	
	And also / in another priuee place	620
	ffor god so wys / be my sauaciõ	
	I ne loued neuere / by no discreciõ	
	But euere / folwed myn appetit	
	Al were he / short ^r or long ^r or blak / or whit	624
	I took no kepe / so that he liked me	
	How poore he was / ne eek/ of what degree	
	¶ What sholde I seye / but at the Monthes ende	
	This ioly clerk/ Iankyn þat was so hende	628
	Hath wedded me / with greet solempnytee	
	And to hym yaf I / al the lond and fee	
	That euere / was me yeuen ther-bifoore	
	But afterward / repented me ful soore	632
	He nolde suffre / nothyng of my list ^r	
	By god / he smoot me ones on the lyst ^r	
	ffor þat I rente / out of his book ^r a leef /	
	That of the strook / myn ere wax al deef /	636

¶ Mansor
Araphorison'. 19.
¶ Cumque in
ascendente
fuerint infortune
turpem notam in
facie pacietur || In
natiuitatibus
mulierum cum
fuerit ascendens
aliqua de domibus
Veneris / Marte
existente in eis /
vel e contrario erit
mulier inpudica ||
Idem erit / si
nabuert
capricornum in
ascendente ||
He[c] Hermes in
libro fiducie Am-
phoris 24e

- Stibourne I was / as is a Leonesse
 And of my tonge / a verray Iangleresse
 And walke I wolde / as I had doon biforn
 ffrom hous to hous / al-though he had it sworn 640
 ffor which / he often tymes wolde preche
 And me / of olde Romayn geestes teche
 How he symplicius Gallus / lefte his wyf^t
 And hire forsok / for *terme* of al his lyf^t 644
 Noght^t but for open-heueded / he hir say
 Lokynge out at his dore / vpon a day
 ¶ Another Romayn / tolde he me by name
 That for his wyf / was at a someres game 648
With-outen his wityng^t he forsook hire eke
 And thanne wolde he / vp-on his Bible seke
 That ilke prouerbe / of Ecclesiaste
 Where he comandeth / and forbedeth faste 652
 Mau shal nat suffre his wyf go roule aboute
 Thanne wolde he seye right/ thus / *with*-outen doute
 ¶ Who so / that buyldeth his hous / al of salwes
 And priketh his blyndehors / ouer the falwes 656
 ¶ And suffreth his wyf / to go seken halwes
 Is worthy / to been hanged / on the galwes
 But al for noght^t I sette noght^t an hawe
 Of his prouerbes / nof his olde awe 660
 Ne I wolde nat^t of hym corrected be
 I hate hym / that my vices telleth me
 And so doo mo / god woot of vs / than I
 This made hym / with me wood al outrelly 664
 I nolde noght / forbere hym in no cas
 ¶ Now wol I seye yow sooth / by seint Thomas
 Why þat I rente / out of his book a leef
 ffor which / he smoot me so / þat I was deef 668
 ¶ He hadde a book / þat gladly nyght and day
 ffor his desport^t he wolde rede alway
 He cleped it^t Valerie / and Theofraste
 At which book/ he lough alwey ful faste 672

¶ Valerius. libro
6^o folio. 19^o

¶ Nota.

[leaf 74] ¶ Ne des muliert
nequam veniam
prodeundi
ecclesiastici .25^o
[verse 25-6]

- ¶ And eek/ ther was som tyme / a clerk at Rome
 A Cardinal / that highte Seint Ierome
 That made a book' agayn Iouinian
 In which book' eek' ther was Tertulan 676
 Crisippus / Trotula / and Helowys
 That was Abbesse / nat fer fro Parys
 And eek' the Parables of Salomon
 Ouides Art' and bookes many on 680
 And alle thise / were bounden / in o volume
 And euery nyght and day / was his custume
 Whan he hadde leyser / and vacacioñ
 ffrom oother / worldly / occupacioñ 684
 To reden on this book / of wikked wyues
 He knew of hem / mo legendes and lyues
 Than been / of goode wyues in the Bible.
 ffor trusteth wel / it is an impossible 688
 That any clerk' wol speke good of wyues
 But if it be / of hooly seintes lyues
 Ne noon oother womman / neuer the mo
 Who peynted the leon / tel me who ? 692
 By god / if wommen / hadde writen stories
 As clerkes han / with-Inne hire oratories
 They wolde han writen / of men moore wikkednesse
 Than all the mark/ of Adam may redresse 696
 The children / of Mercurie and Venus
 Been in hir wirkyng' ful contrarius
 Mercurie / loueth wysdam and science
 And Venus / loueth ryot' and dispence 700
 And for hire diuerse disposicioñ
 Ech falleth / in otheres exaltacioñ
 And thus god woot' Mercurie is desolat'
 In Pisces / wher Venus is exaltat' 704
 ¶ *Vterque cadit vbi alia exaltatur*
 ¶ In libro Mansor primo ||
 Vniuscuiusque planetarum . 4 . ||
 Exaltacio illo in loco fore dicitur in quo subito
 ¶ *.i. in Virgine*
 And Venus falleth / ther Mercurie is reysed [leaf 74, back]
 Therefore no womman / of no clerk is preyed
 The clerk' whan he is oold / and may nought do
 Of Venus werkes / worth his olde sho 708

Thanne sit he doun / and writ in his dotage

That wommen / kan nat kepe hir mariage

But now to purpos / why I tolde thee

That I was beten / for a book pardee

Vp-on a nyght^t Iankyn þat was oure sire

Redde on his book / as he sat by the fire

Of Eua first^t that for hir wikkednesse

Was al mankynde / broght to wrecchednesse

ffor which crist^t hym self / was slayn

That boghte vs / with his herte blood agayn

Lo heere expres / of womman may ye fynde

That womman / was the los / of al mankynde

¶ Tho redde he me / how Sampson loste hise heres

Slepyng / his lemman / kitte it *with* hir sheres

Thurgh which treson / loste he bothe hise eyen

¶ Tho redde he me / if that I shal nat lyen

Of Hercules / and of his Dianyre

That caused hym / to sette hymself afyre

¶ No thyng^t forgat he / the sorwe and wo

That Socrates / hadde *with* hise wyues two

How Xantippa / caste pisse vp-on his heed

This sely man / sat stille as he were deed

He wiped his heed / namoore dorste he seyn

But^t er þat thonder stynte / comth a reyn

¶ Of Phasifpha / that was the queene of Crete

ffor shrewednesse / hym thoughte the tale swete

ffy speke namoore / it is a grisly thyng^t

Of hire / horrible lust^t and hir likyng^t

¶ Of Clitermystra / for hire lecherye

That falsly / made hire housbonde for to dye

He redde it / with ful good deuocion

¶ He tolde me eek^t for what occasion

Amphiorax / at Thebes loste his lyf^t

Myn housbonde / hadde a legende of his wyf /

¶ Eriphilem / that for an Ouche of gold

Hath priuely / vn-to the grekes told

patitur ab alio
contrarium &
cetera ; Velut
Mercurius in
virgine que est
casus veneris ||.
Alter . scilicet .
Mercurius
significat
scientiam &
philosophiam ||.
Alter vero cantus
& alacritates &
quicquid est
sapiferum corpori

712

716

720

724

728

732

736

740

744

¶ Quid referam
Phasifphen /
Clitermystram &
Eriphilem /
quarum prima
delicij fluens
quippe vt Regis
vxor Tauri dicitur
adpetisse
concupitus . Allu
occidisse virum
suum ob amorem
Adulterij . || Tercia
perdidisse
Amphiorax &
saluti viri
monile Aureum
pertulisse &c ||
Hec Metellius
Marrio secundum
Valerium

Wher that hir housbonde / hidde hym in a place
 ffor which / he hadde at Thebes sory grace
 ¶ Of Lyma tolde he me / and of Lucye
 They bothe / made hir housbondes for to dye 748
 That oon for loue / that oother was for hate
 Lyma hir housbonde / vp-on an euen late
 Empoysoned hath / for þat she was his fo
 Lucia likerous / loued hire housbonde so 752
 That for he sholde / alwey vp-on hire thynke [leaf 75]
 She yaf hym / swich a manere loue drynke
 That he was deed / er it were by the morwe
 And thus algates / housbondes han sorw 756
 ¶ Thanne tolde he me / how þat oon Latumyus
 Compleyned / vn-to his felawe Arrius
 That in his gardyn / growed swich a tree
 On which he seyde / how that hise wyues thre 760
 Hanged hem self for herte despitus
 ¶ O leue brother / quod this Arrius
 Yif me a plante / of thilke blissed tree
 And in my gardyn / planted it shal bee 764
 ¶ Of latter date of wyues / hath he red
 That somme / han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed
 And lete hir lecchour / dighte hire al the nyght
 Whan that the corps / lay in the floor vp right 768
 ¶ And somme / han dryue nayles / in hir brayn
 Whil þat they slepte / and thus they han hem slayn
 ¶ Somme han hem yeue / poysoun in hire drynke
 He spak moore harm / than herte may bithynke 772
 And ther-with-al / he knew of mo prouerbes
 Than in this world / ther growen gras or herbes
 Bet is quod he / thyn habitacioun
 Be with a leoun / or a foul dragoun 776
 Than with a womman / vsynge for to chyde
 Bet is quod he / hye in the roof abyde
 Than with an angry wyf / down in the hous
 They been so wikked and contrarious 780

They haten / that hir housbondes / loueth ay
 He seyde / a womman cast hir shame away
 Whan she cast of hir smok' and forther mo
 A fair womman / but she be chaast also 784
 Is lyk a gold ryng' in a sowes nose
 Who wolde leeuē / or who wolde suppose
 The wo / that in myn herte was and pyne
 ¶ And whan I saugh / he wolde neuere fyne 788
 To reden on this cursed book al nygh't
 Al sodeynly / thre leues haue I plygh't
 Out of his book' right as he radde / and eke ,
 I with my fest' so took hym on the cheke 792
 That in oure fyr / he fil bakward adoun
 And he vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun
 And with his fest' he smoot me on the heed
 That in the floor / I lay / as I were deed 796
 And whan he saugh / how stille þat I lay
 He was agast' and wolde han fled his way
 Til atte laste / out of my swogh I breyde
 O hastow slayn me / false theef I seyde 800
 And for my land / thus hastow mordred me [leaf 75, back]
 Er I be deed / yet wol I kisse thee
 ¶ And neer he cam / and kneled faire adoun
 And seyde / deere suster Alisoun 804
 As help me god / I shal thee neuere smyte
 That I haue doon / it is thy self to wyte
 fforyeue it me / and that I thee biseke
 And yet eft soones / I hitte hym on the cheke 808
 And seyde theef / thus muchel am I wreke
 Now wol I dye / I may no lenger speke
 But atte laste / with muchel care and wo
 We fille acorded / by vs seluen two 812
 He yaf me / al the bridel in myn hond'
 To han the gouernance / of hous and lond'
 And of his tonge / and his hond also
 And made hym brenne his book' anon right tho 816

¶ Circulus
 aureus in naribus
 Suis Mulior
 formosa & fatua
 .i. impudica

And whan that I / hadde gotten vn-to me
 By maistrie / al the soueraynetee
 And that he seyde / myn owene trewe wyf/
 Do as thee lust to terme of al thy lyf^t 820
 Keepe thyn honour / and keepe eek myn estaat/
 After that day / we hadden neuer debaat
 God helpe me so / I was to hym as kynde
 As any wyf from Denmark vn-to Ynde 824
 And also trewe / and so was he to me
 I prey to god / that sit in magestee
 So blesse his soule / for his mercy deere
 Now wol I seye my tale / if ye wol heere 828

¶ Biholde the wordes bitwene the Somonour / and the
 frere 𐀀

The frere lough / whan he hadde herd al this
 Now dame quod he / so haue I ioye or blis
 This is / a long preamble of a tale
 And whan the Somonour / herde the frere gale 832
 ¶ Lo quod the Somonour / goddes Armes two
 A frere / wol entremette him euere-mo
 Lo goode men / a flye and eek a frere
 Wol falle / in euery dyssh and mateere 836
 What spekestow / of preambulacioun
 What amble / or trotte / or pees / or go sit doun
 Thou lettest oure disport in this manere
 ¶ Ye woltow so / sire Somonour quod the frere 840
 Now by my feith / I shal er that I go
 Telle of a Somonour / swich a tale or two
 That alle the folk / shal laughen in this place
 ¶ Now elles frere / I bishrewe thy face 844
 Quod this Somonour and I bishrewe me [leaf 7C]
 But if I telle tales / two or thre
 Of freres / er I come to Sidyngborne
 That I shal make / thyn herte for to morne 848

ffor wel I woot' thy pacience is gon

¶ Oure hoost cride pees / and that anon

And seyde / lat the womman telle hire tale

Ye fare as folk / that dronken were of Ale 852

Do dame / telle forth youre tale / and that is best'

¶ Al redy sire quod she / right as yow lest'

If I haue licence / of this worthy frere

¶ Yis dame quod he / tel forth / and I wol heere 856

¶ Heere endeth the Wyf of Bathe hir Prologe /

And bigynneth hir tale

[on leaf 76]

IN tholde dayes / of Kyng Arthour
 Of which that Britons / speken greet honour
 All was this land / fulfild of ffairye
 The Elf queene / with hir ioly compaignye 860
 Daunced ful ofte / in many a grene mede [Painting of the Wife
of Bath astride her
horse]
 This was the olde opinion as I rede
 I speke / of manye hundred yeres ago
 But now kan no man / se none Elues mo 864
 ffor now the grete charitee / and prayeres
 Of lymytours / and othere hooly freres
 That serchen / euery lond / and euery stream
 As thikke / as motes / in the sonne beam 868
 Blessynge halles / chambres / kichenes / boures
 Citees / Burghes / Castels / hye Toures
 Thropes / Bernes / Shipnes / dayeryes
 This maketh / that ther been no ffairyes 872
 ffor ther as wont to walken was an Elf
 Ther walketh now / the lymytour hym self
 In vndermeles / and in morvenynges
 And seyth his matyns / and his hooly thynges 876
 As he gooth / in his lymytacioun
 Wommen / may go sauffy vp and down
 In euery busshe / or vnder euery tree
 Ther is / noon oother Incubus / but he 880
 And he / ne wol doon hem / but dishonour
 ¶ And so bifel / that this kyng Arthour
 Hadde in hous / a lusty Bacheler
 That on a day / cam ridynge fro Ryuer 884

And happed that allone / as he was born
 He saugh a mayde / walkynge hym biforn
 Of which mayde / anon maugree hir heed [leaf 76, back]
 By verray force / birafte hire maydenhed 888
 ffor which oppression / was swich clamour
 And swich pursute / vn-to the kyng Arthour
 That dampned was this knyght for to be deed
 By cours of lawe / and sholde han lost his heed 892
 Paraurenture / swich was the statut tho
 But that the queene / and othere ladyes mo
 So longe preyden / the kyng of grace
 Til he / his lyf / hym graunted in the place 896
 And yaf hym to the queene / al at hir wille
 To chese / wheither/ she wolde hym saue or spille
 ¶ The queene / thanketh the kyng^t with al hir myght^t
 And after this / thus spak she to the knyght^t 900
 Whan þat she saugh hir tyme vp-on a day
 Thou standest yet quod she / in swich array
 That of thy lyf / yet hastow no suretee
 I grante thee lyf / if thou kanst tellen me 904
 What thyng is it^t that wommen moost desiren
 Be war / and keepe thy nekke boon from Iren
 And if thou / kanst nat tellen it anon
 Yet shal I yeue thee leue / for to gon 908
 A twelf-month and a day / to seche and leere
 An answeere suffisant in this mateere
 And suretee wol I han / er þat thou pace
 Thy body / for to yelden in this place 912
WO was this knyght^t and sorwefully he siketh
 But he may nat do / al as hym liketh
 And at the laste / he chees hym for to wende
 And come agayn / right at the yeres ende 916
 With swich answeere / as god wolde hym purueye
 And taketh his leue / and wendeth forth his weye
 ¶ He seketh / euery hous / and euery place
 Where as he hopeth / for to fynde grace 920

To lerne / what thyng ^t wommen louen moost	
But he ne koude / arryuen in no coost ^t	
Wher as he myghte fynde / in this mateere	
Two creatures / accordynge in feere	924
¶ Somme seyde / wommen / louen best richesse	
Somme seyde honour / somme seyde Iolynesse	
Somme riche array / somme seyden lust abedd	
And ofte tyme / to be wydwe and wedde	928
¶ Somme seyde / þat oure hertes / been moost esed	
Whan that we been / yflatered and yplesed	
¶ He gooth ful ny the sothe / I wol nat lye	
A man / shal wynne vs best ^t with flaterye	932
And with attendance / and with bisynesse	
Been we ylymed / bothe moore and lesse	
¶ And somme seyn / that we louen best ^t	[leaf 77]
ffor to be free / and do right as vs lest ^t	936
And that no man / repreue vs of oure vice	
But seye þat we be wise / and no thyng nyce	
ffor trewely / ther is noon of vs alle	
If any wight / wol clawe vs on the galle	940
That we nel kike / for he seith vs sooth	
Assay / and he shal fynde it þat so dooth	
ffor be we / neuer so vicious with-Inne	
We wol been holden wise / and clene of synne	944
¶ And somme seyn / that greet delit han we	
ffor to been holden stable / and eke secree	
And in o purpos / stedefastly to dwelle	
And nat biwreye thyng ^t that men vs telle	948
But that tale / is nat worth a rake stele	
Pardee we wommen / konne no thyng ^t hele	
Witnesse on Myda / wol ye heere the tale	
¶ Ouyde / amonges othere thynges smale	952
Seyde / Myda hadde vnder his longe heres	
Growynge vp-on his heed / two Asses eres	
The which vice he hydde / as he best myghte	
fful subtilly / from euery mannes sighte	956

- That saue his wyf / ther wiste of it namo
 He loued hire moost' and triste hire also
 He preyde hire / that to no creature
 She sholde tellen / of his disfigure 960
 ¶ She swoor him nay / for al this world to wynne
 She nolde do / that vileynye or synne
 To make hir housbonde / han so foul a name
 She nolde nat telle it' for hir owene shame 964
 But nathelees / hir thoughte þat she dyde
 That she so longe / sholde a conseil hyde
 Hir thoughte / it swal so soore / aboute hir herte
 That nedely / som word hire moste asterte 968
 And sith she dorste / telle it to no man
 Doun to a Mareys / faste by she ran
 Til she came there / her herte was a fyre
 And as a Bitore / bombleth in the Myre 972
 She leyde hir mouth / vn-to the water doun
 Biwreye me nat' thou water *wit* thy soun
 Quod she / to thee I telle it and namo
 Myn housbonde / hath longe Asses erys two 976
 Now is myn herte all hool / now is it oute
 I myghte no lenger / kepe it' out of doute
 Heere may ye se / thogh̄ we a tyme abyde
 Yet out it moot' we kan no conseil hyde 980
 The remenant of the tale / if ye wol heere
 Redeth Ouyde / and ther ye may it leere
THis knyght' / of which / my tale is specially [leaf 77, back]
 Whan that he saugh / he myghte nat come therby
 This is to seye / what wommen loue moost' 985
 With-Inne his brest' ful sorweful was the goost'
 But hoom he gooth / he myghte nat soiourne
 The day was come / þat homward moste he tourne 988
 And in his way / it happed hym to ryde
 In al this care / vnder a fforest syde
 Wher as he saugh̄ / vp-on a daunce go'
 Of ladyes / foure and twenty / and yet mo 992

Toward the which daunce / he drow ful yerne
 In hope / that som wysdom / sholde he lerne
 But certeinly / er he came fully there
 Vanysshed was this daunce / he nyste where 996
 No creature saugh he / that bar lyf
 Saue on the grene / he saugh sittynge a wyf
 A fouler wight ther may no man deuysen
 Agayn the knyght this olde wyf gan ryse 1000
 And seyde sire knyght / heer forth ne lith no wey
 Tel me / what that ye seken / by youre fey
 Paraventure / it may the bettre be
 Thise olde folk kan muchel thyngs quod she 1004
 ¶ My leue mooder / quod this knyght certeyn
 I nam but deed / but if that I kan seyn
 What thyng it is / that wommen moost desire
 Koude ye me wisse / I wolde wel quite youre hire 1008
 ¶ Plight me thy trouthe / heere in myn hand quod she
 The nexte thyng that I requere thee
 Thou shalt it do / if it lye in thy myght
 And I wol telle it yow / er it be nyght 1012
 ¶ Haue heer my trouthe / quod the knyght I grante
 ¶ Thanne quod she / I dar me wel auante
 Thy lyf is sauf / for I wol stonde therby
 Vp-on my lyf / the queene wol seye as I 1016
 Lat se / which is the proudeste of hem alle
 That wereth on / a couerchief / or a calle
 That dar seye nay / of that I shal thee teche
 ¶ at vs go forth / with-ouen lenger speche 1020
 Tho rowred she / a pistel in his ere
 And bad hym to be glad / and haue no fere
 ¶ Whan they be comen to the court / this knyght
 Seyde / he had holde his day / as he hadde hight 1024
 And redy was his answeere / as he sayde
 fful many a noble wyf / and many a mayde
 And many a wydwe / for þat they been wise
 The queene hir-self sittynge as Iustise 1028

Assembled been / his answer for to heere
 And afterward / this knyght was bode appeere
 ¶ To euery wight / comanded was silence [leaf 78]
 And that the knyght / sholde telle in Audience 1032
 What thyng that worldly wommen louen best
 This knyght ne stood nat stille / as doth a best
 But to his questioun / anon answerde
 With manly voys / that al the court it herde 1036
 ¶ My lige lady / generally / quod he
 Wommen desiren haue souereynetee
 As wel / ouer hir housbond as hir loue
 And for to been / in maistrie hym aboute 1040
 This is youre mooste desir / thogh ye me kille
 Dooth as yow list I am at youre wille
 ¶ In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
 Ne wydwe / that contraried that he sayde 1044
 But seyden / he was worthy han his lyf
 ¶ And with that word / vp stirte the olde wyf
 Which that the knyght / saugh sittyng in the grene
 Mercy quod she my souereyn lady queene 1048
 Er that youre court departe / do me right
 I taughte this answer / vn-to the knyght
 ffor which / he plighte me his trouthe there
 The firste thyng I wolde hym requere 1052
 He wolde it do / if it lay in his myght
 Bifore the court / thanne preye I thee *sir* knyght
 Quod she / that thou me take vn-to thy wyf/
 ffor wel thou woost that I haue kept thy lyf 1056
 If I sey fals / sey nay vp-on thy fey
 ¶ This knyght answerde / allas and weylaway
 I woot right wel / that swich was my biheste
 ffor goddes loue / as chees a newe requeste 1060
 Taak al my good / and lat my body go
 ¶ Nay thanne quod she / I shrewe vs bothe two
 ffor thogh that I be foul / oold and poore
 I nolde for al the metal / ne for oore 1064

- That vnder erthe is graue / or lith about
 But if thy wyf I were / and eek thy loue
 ¶ My loue quod he? nay my dampnaciōn
 Allas / that any of my naciōn 1068
 Sholde euere so foule / disparaged be
 But al for noght^t thende is this / that he
 Constreyned was / he nedes moste hire wedde
 And taketh his olde wyf / and gooth to bedde 1072
 ¶ Now wolden som men / seye parauenture
 That for my negligence / I do no cure
 To tellen yow / the ioie / and al tharray
 That at the feeste was / that ilke day 1076
 To which thyng^t shortly answerē I shal
 I seye / ther nas no ioie / ne feeste at al
 Ther nas but heynesse / and mucho sorwe [leaf 78, back]
 ffor priuely / he wedded hire on a morwe 1080
 And al day after / hidde hym as an Owle
 So wo was hym / his wyf looked so foule
 ¶ Greet was the wo / the knyght hadde in his thoght^t
 Whan he was with his wyf abedde ybroght^t/ 1084
 He walweth / and he turneth to and fro
 His olde wyf / lay smyllynge euere mo
 And seyde / o deere housbonde benedicitee
 ffareth euery knyght / thus with his wyf / as ye? 1088
 Is this the lawe / of kyng^t Arthures hous?
 Is euery knyght of his so dangerous?
 I am youre owene loue / and youre wyf/
 I am she / which þat saued hath youre lyf/ 1092
 And certes / yet ne dide I yow neuere vnryght/
 Why fare ye thus with me / this firste nyght/?
 Ye faren lyk a mān / had lost his wit^t
 What is my gilt^t? for goddes loue tel it 1096
 And it shal been amended / if I may
 ¶ Amended quod this knyght^t? allas / nay / nay /
 It wol nat been amended neuere mo
 Thou art so loothly / and so oold also 1100

And ther-to comen / of so lough a kynde
 That litel wonder is / thogh I walwe and wynde
 So wolde god / myn herte wolde breste
 ¶ Is this quod she / the cause of youre vnreste? 1104
 ¶ Ye certainly quod he / no wonder is
 ¶ Now sire quod she / I koude amende al this
 If that me liste / er it were dayes thre
 So wel ye myghte / bere yow vn-to me 1108
Bvt for ye speken / of swich gentillesse ¶ De generositate
 As is descended / out of old richesse
 That therefore / sholden ye be gentil men
 Swich arrogance / is nat worth an hen 1112
 Looke / who that is / moost vertuous alway
 Pryuce and apert and moost entendeth ay
 To do / the gentil dedes that he kan
 Taak hym / for the grettest ¹gentil man¹ [1-1 later] 1116
 Crist wole / we clayme of hym oure gentillesse
 Nat of oure eldres / for hire old richesse
 ffor thogh they yeue vs / al hir heritage
 ffor which we clayme / to been of heigh parage 1120
 Yet may they nat biquethe / for no thyng
 To noon of vs / hir vertuous lyuyng
 That made hem / gentil men ycalled be
 And bad vs / folwen hem in swich degree 1124
 ¶ Wel kan / the wise Poete of fflorence
 That highte Dant' speken in this sentence
 ¶ Lo / in swich maner rym / is Dantes tale (leaf 79)
 fful selde vp riseth / by his branches smale 1128
 Prowesse of man / for god of his goodnesse
 Wole / that of hym / we clayme oure gentillesse
 ffor of oure eldres / may we no thyng clayme
 But temporel thyng' þat man may hurte and mayme 1132
 ¶ Eek every wight' woot this as wel as I
 If gentillesse / were planted natureelly
 Vn-to a certeyn lynage / doun the lyne
 Pryuce nor apert' thanne wolde they neuere fyne 1136

To doon of gentillesse / the faire office
 They myghte do / no vileynye or vice
 ¶ Taak fyr / and ber it' in the derkeste hous
 Bitwix this / and the mount' of Kaukasous 1140
 And lat men / shette the dores and go thenne
 Yet wole the fyr / as faire lye and brenne
 As twenty thousand men / myghte it biholde
 His office natureel / ay wol it holde 1144
 Vp peril of my lyf / til that it dye
 ¶ Heere may ye se wel / how þat genterye ¶ exemplum
 Is nat annexed to possession
 Sith folk / ne doon hir operacion 1148
 Alwey as dooth the fyr / lo in his kynde
 ffor god it woot' men may wel often fynde
 A lordes sone / do shame and vileynye
 And he þat wole / han pris of his gentrye 1152
 ffor he was born / of a gentil hous
 And hadde hise eldres / noble and vertuous
 And nel hym seluen / do no gentil dedis
 Ne folwen his gentil Auncestre þat deed is 1156
 He nys nat gentil / be he duc or Erl
 ffor vileyns synful dedes / make a cherl
 ffor gentillesse / nys but renomee
 Of thyne auncestres / for hire heigh bountee 1160
 Which is a strange thyng' to thy persone
 Thy gentillesse / cometh fro god allone
 Thanne comth / oure verray gentillesse of grace
 It was no thyng / biquethe vs with oure place 1164
 ¶ Thenketh hou noble / as seith Valerius
 Was thilke / Tullius Hostillius
 That out of pouerte / roos to heigh noblesse
 Reed senek / and redeth eek Boece 1168
 Ther shul ye seen expres / þat no drede is
 That he is gentil / that dooth gentil dedis
 And therefore leue housbonde / I thus conclude
 Al were it / that myne Auncestres weren rude 1172

- Yet may the hye god / and so hope .I.
 Grante me grace / to lyuen vertuously
 Thanne am I gentil / whan that I bigynne [leaf 79, back]
 To lyuen vertuously / and weyue synne 1176
- A**Nd ther as ye / of pouerte me repreue
 ¶ De paupertate
 The hye god / on whom þat we bileue
 In wilful pouerte / chees to lyue his lyf
 And certes / euery man / mayden or wyf/ 1180
 May vnderstonde / that Ihesus heuene kyng'
 Ne wolde nat chesen vicious lyuyng'
 Glad pouerte / is an honeste thyng certeyn
 ¶ Seneca in
 This wole Senec' and othere clerkes seyn 1184
 ¶ Honesta res est
 leta paupertas
 Who so þat halt hym payd of his pouerte
 I holde hym riche / al hadde he nat a sherte
 He þat coueiteth / is a pouere wighit'
 ¶ Pauper est qui
 ffor he wolde han / that is nat in his myghit' 1188
 non habet/ sed qu
 non habet nec
 appetit habere
 But he þat noghit hath / ne coueiteth haue
 Is riche / al-though ye holde hym but a knaue
 ¶ id/ Apocalypsis
 .3º dicit quia
 diues sum
 ¶ Verray pouerte / it syngeth proprely
 Iuuenal / seith of pouerte myrily 1192
 The poure man / whan he goth by the weye
 Bifore the theues / he may synge and pleye
 Pouerte is hateful good / and as I gesse
 ¶ Cantabit vacuus
 coram latrone
 viator / et nocte
 ad lumen trepidabit
 Arnadinis
 vmbra
 ¶ 2º Philosophus
 ¶ Paupertas est
 odibile bonum /
 sanitatis mater /
 curarum remocio /
 sapientie reparatrix /
 possessio sine calumpnia
 A ful greet bryngere / out of bisynesse 1196
 A greet amendere eek of sapience
 To hym / that taketh it in pacience
 Pouerte is this / al-though it seme alenge
 Possession / that no wighit' wol challenge 1200
 Pouerte ful ofte / whan a man is lowe
 Maketh his god / and eek hym self to knowe
 Pouerte / a spectacle is / as thynketh me
 Thurgit which he may / hise verray freendes see 1204
 And therefore sire / syn þat I noghit yow greue
 Abite inquit
 pessime male
 cupiditates / ego
 vos mergam / ne
 ipse mergar a
 vobis
 Of my pouerte / namoore ye me repreue
 ¶ De senectute
NOW sire / of elde / ye repreue me 1208
 And certes sire / thogh noon Auctoritee

- Were in no book / ye gentils of honour
 Seyn / þat men sholde / an oold wight doon fauour
 And clepe hym fader / for youre gentillesse
 And Auctours / shal I fynden as I gesse 1212
- N**ow ther ye seye / þat I am foul and old ¶ *De turpitudine*
 Than drede you noght / to been a Cokewold
 ffor filthe and eelde / al so moot I thee
 Been grete wardeyns / vp-on chastitee 1216
 But natheles / syn I knowe youre delit
 I shal fulfille / youre worldly appetit
 ¶ Chese now quod she / oon of thise thynges tweye
 To han me foul and old / til that I deye 1220
 And be to yow / a trewe humble wyf
 And neuere yow displese / in al my lyf
 Or elles / ye wol han me yong and fair [leaf 80]
 And take youre auenture / of the repair 1224
 That shal be to youre hous / by cause of me
 Or in som oother place / may wel be
 Now chese your seluen / wheither þat yow liketh
 ¶ This knyght auyseth hym and sore siketh 1228
 But atte laste / he seyde in this manere
 My lady and my loue / and wyf so deere
 I put me / in youre wise gouernance
 Cheseth youre self / which may be moost plesance 1232
 And moost honour / to yow and me also
 I do no fors / the wheither/ of the two
 ffor as yow liketh / it suffiseth me
 ¶ Thanne haue I gete of yow / maistrie quod she 1236
 Syn I may chese / and gouerne as me lest
 ¶ Ye certes wyf quod he / I holde it best
 ¶ Kys me quod she / we be no lenger wrothe
 ffor by my trouthe / I wol be to yow bothe 1240
 This is to seyn / ye bothe fair and good
 I prey to god / þat I moote steruen wood
 But I to yow / be al so good and trewe
 As euere was wyf / syn þat the world was newe 1244

And but I be tomorn / as fair to seene
 As any lady / Emperice or queene
 That is bitwixe the Est^t and eke the West
 Dooth *with* my lyf / and deth / right^t as yow lest^t 1248
 Cast vp the curtyn / looke how that it is
 ¶ And whan the knyght^t saugh *verraily* al this
 That she so fair was / and so yong ther-to
 ffor ioye / he hente hire / in hise armes two 1252
 His herte bathed / in a bath of blisse
 A thousand tyme arewe / he gan hire kisse
 And she obeyed hym in euery thyng^t
 That myghte doon hym plesance or likyng^t 1256
 ¶ And thus they lyue / vn-to hir lyues ende
 In *parfit* ioye / and Ihesu crist vs sende
 Housbondes meeke / yonge / fressh a bedde
 And grace / *touerbyde* hem þat we wedde 1260
 And eek / I pray Ihesu shorte hir lyues
 That nat wol be gouerned by hir wyues
 And olde and angry nygardes of dispence
 God sende hem soone / *verray* pestilence 1264

¶ Heere endeth / the Wyues tale of Bathe ♀

¶ The prologe of the freres tale 𐀚

[leaf 80, back]

THis worthy lymytour / this noble frere
 He made alwey / a maner louryng chiere
 Vpon the Somonour / but for honestee
 No vileyns word / as yet to hym spak he 1268
 But atte laste / he seyde vn-to the wyf
 Dame quod he / god yeue yow right good lyf
 Ye han heer touched / al so moot I thee
 In scole matere / greet difficultee 1272
 Ye han seyde muche thyng^t right wel I seye
 But dame / heere as we ryde by the weye
 Vs nedeth nat. to speken but of game
 And lete / auctoritees / on goddes name 1276
 To prechyng^t and to scole of clergye
 And if it lyke / to this compaignye
 I wol yow / of a somonour telle a game
 Pardee / ye may wel knowe by the name 1280
 That of a Somonour / may no good be sayd^t
 I praye / þat noon of you / be yuele apayd^t
 A Somonour / is a rennere vp and down
 With mandementz / for fornicacioun 1284
 And is y-bet^t at euery townes ende
 ¶ Oure hoost tho spak / a sire ye sholde be hende
 And curteys / as a man of youre estaat^t
 In compaignye / we wol haue no debaat^t 1288
 Telleth youre tale / and lat the Somonour be
 ¶ Nay quod the Somonour / lat hym seye to me
 What so hym list^t whan it comth to my lot^t
 By god / I shal hym quiten euery grot^t 1292
 I shal hym tellen / which a greet honour
 It is / to be a flatorynge lymytour
 And of many another manere cryme
 Which nedeth nat^t rehercen for this tyme 1296
 And his office / I shal hym telle ywis
 ¶ Oure hoost answerde / pees namoore of this
 And after this / he seyde vn-to the frere
 Tel forth youre tale / leeuē maister deere 1300

¶ Heere bigynneth the freres tale 𐀀

[Painting of the Friar.]
W Hilom ther was dwellynge / in my contree
 An Erchedekene / a man of heigh degree
 That boldely / dide execucioun
 In punysshynge / of fornicacioun 1304
 Of wicchecraft and eek of bawderye [leaf 81]
 Of diffamacioun / and Auowtrye
 Of chirche Reues / and of testamentz
 Of contractes / and eek of lakke of sacramentz 1308
 Of vsure / and of Symonye also
 But *certes* / lecchours dide he grettest wo
 They sholde syngen / if þat they were hent
 And smale tytheres / weren foule yshent 1312
 If any *persone* / wolde vp-on hem pleyne
 Ther myghte asterte hym / no pecunyal peyne
 ffor smale tithes / and smal offrynge
 He made the peple / pitously to synge 1316
 ffor er the bisshope / caughte hym *with* his hook
 They were in the Erchedeknes book/
 And thanne / hadde he / thurgħ his Iurisdiccioñ
 Power / to doon on hem correccioñ 1320
 He hadde a *Somonour* / redy to his hond
 A slyer boye / was noon in Engeland
 ffor subtilly / he hadde his espialle
 That taughte hym / wher hym myghte auaille 1324
 He koude spare of lecchours / oon or two
 To techen hym / to foure and twenty mo
 ffor thogh this *somonour* / wood was as an hare
 To telle his harlotrye / I wol nat spare 1328

- ffor we been / out of his correccioñ
 They han of vs no Iurisdiccioñ
 Ne neuere shullen / terme of hir lyues
 ¶ Peter / so been / wommen of the styves 1332
 Quod the Somonour / yput out of my cure
 ¶ Pees with myschance / and with mysaventure
 Thus seydeoure hoost' and lat hym telle his tale
 Now telleth forth / thogh þat the somonour gale 1336
 Ne spareth nat / myn owene maister deere
 ¶ This false theef' this Somonour quod the frere
 Hadde alwey / bawdes redy to his hond'
 As any hauk' to lure in Engelonc' 1340
 That tolde hym / al the secree þat they knewe
 ffor hire acqueyntance / was nat come of newe
 They weren / hise approwours priuely
 He took hym self / a greet profit therby 1344
 His maister knew nat / alwey / what he wan
 With-ouen mandement / a lewed man
 He koude somne / on peyne of Cristes curs
 And they were glade / for to fille his purs 1348
 And make hym / grete feestes atte nale
 And right as Iudas / hadde purses smale
 And was a theef' right' swich a theef was he
 His maister / hadde / but half his duetee 1352
 He was / if I shal yeuen hym his laude
 [leaf 81, back]
 A theef / and eek / a Somnour / and a baude
 He hadde eek wenches / at his retenue
 That wheither / þat sir Robert or sir Huwe 1356
 Or Iakke / or Rauf / or who so þat it were
 That lay by hem / they tolde it in his ere
 ¶ Thus was the wenche and he / of oon assent'
 And he wolde fecche / a feyned mandement' 1360
 And somne hem to the Chapitre bothe two
 And pile the man / and lete the wenche go
 ¶ Thanne wolde he seye / freend I shal for thy sake
 Do striken hire / out of oure lettres blake 1364

Thee thar namoore / as in this cas *travaille*
 I am thy freend / ther I thee may auaille
 Certeyn / he knew of bribryes mo
 Than possible is / to telle in yeres two 1368
 ffor in this world / nys dogge for the bowe
 That kan an hurt deer / from an hool knowe
 Bet / than this Somnour / knew a sly lecchour
 Or an Auowtier / or a *paramour* 1372
 And for that was / the fruyt^t of al his rente
 Therefore on it^t he sette al his entente
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones on a day
 This Somnour / euere waityng^t on his pray 1376
 ffor to somne an old wydwe a Ribibe
 ffeynyng a cause / for he wolde brybe
 Happed / that he saugh bifore hym ryde
 A gay yeman / vnder a fforest syde 1380
 A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighte and kene
 He hadde vp-on / a courtepy of grene
 An hat vp-on his heed / with frenges blake
 ¶ Sire quod this Somnour / hayl and wel atake 1384
 Wel come quod he / and euery good felawe
 Wher rydestow / vnder this grene wode shawe^s
 Seyde this yeman / wiltow fer to day^s
 ¶ This Somnour hym answerde / and seyde nay 1388
 Heere faste by quod he / is myn entente
 To ryden / for to reysen vp a rente
 That longeth / to my lordes duetee
 ¶ Artow thanne a bailly^s? Ye quod he / 1392
 He dorste nat^t for verray filthe and shame
 Seye þat he was a somonour / for the name
 ¶ Depardieux quod this yeman / deere broother
 Thou art a bailly / and I am another 1396
 I am vnknownen / as in this contree
 Of thyn aqueyntance / I wolde praye thee
 And eek of bretherhede / if þat yow leste
 I haue gold / and siluer in my cheste 1400

- If that thee happe / to comen in oure shire [leaf 82]
 Al shal be thyn / right as thou wolt desire
 ¶ Grantmercy quod this Somonour / by my feith
 Euerych in ootheres hand / his trouthe leith 1404
 ffor to be sworn bretheren / til they deye
 In daliance / they ryden forth hir weye
 ¶ This Somonour / that was as ful of Iangles
 As ful of venym been thise waryangles 1408
 And euere enqueryng' vp-on euery thyng'
 Brother quod he / where is now youre dwellyng'
 Another day / if þat I sholde yow seche
 This yeman hym answerde / in softe speche 1412
 ¶ Brother quod he / fer in the North contree
 Where as I hope / som tyme I shal thee see
 Er we departe / I shal thee so wel wisse
 That of myn hous / ne shaltow neuere mysse 1416
 ¶ Now brother quod this Somonour / I yow preye
 Teche me / whil þat we ryden by the weye
 Syn þat ye been / a baillif as am I
 Som subtiltee / and tel me feithfully 1420
 In myn office / how I may moost wynne
 And spareth nat' for conscience ne synne
 But as my brother / tel me / how do ye
 ¶ Now by my trouthe / brother deere seyde he 1424
 As I shal tellen thee / a feithful tale
 My wages / been ful streite and ful smale
 My lord is hard to me / and daungerous
 And myn office / is ful laborous 1428
 And therefore / by extorcions I lyue
 ffor sothe / I take all that' men wol me yeue
 Algate / by sleyghte / or by violence
 ffor yeer to yeer / I wynne al my dispence 1432
 I kan no bettre telle / feithfully
 ¶ Now certes quod this Somonour / so fare I
 I spare nat to taken / god it woot'
 But if it be / to heuy or to hoot' 1436

- What I may gete / in conseil priuely
 No maner conscience / of that haue I
 Nere myn extorcioun / I mygh̄te nat lyuer
 Nor of swiche Iapes / wol I nat be shryuen 1440
 Stomak / ne conscience / ne knowe I noon
 I shrewe thise shrifte-fadres euerychoon
 Wel be we met' by god / and by seint Iame
 But leue brother / tel me thanne thy name 1444
 Quod this somonour / in this meene while
 This yeman / gan a litel for to smyle
 ¶ Brother quod he / wiltow / þat I thee telle
 I am a feend / my dwellyng' is in helle 1448
 And heere I ryde / aboute my purchasyng' [leaf 82, back]
 To wite / wher men wolde me yeuen any thyng'
 My purchas / is theeffect' of al my rente
 Looke / how thou rydest' for the same entente 1452
 To wyne good / thou rekkest neuere how
 Right so fare I / for ryde I wolde right now
 Vn-to the worldes ende / for a preye
 ¶ A quod this Somonour / benedicite what sey ye? 1456
 I wende / ye were a yeman trewely
 Ye han a mannes shape / as wel as I
 Han ye figure thanne determinat'
 In helle / ther ye been in youre estat'? 1460
 ¶ Nay certainly quod he / ther haue we noon
 But whan vs liketh / we kan take vs oon
 Or elles make yow seme / we been shape
 Som tyme / lyk a man or lyk an Ape 1464
 Or lyk an Angel / kan I ryde or go
 It is no wonder thyng' thogh it be so
 A lowsy Iogelour / kan deceyue theè
 And pardee / yet kan I moore craft than he 1468
 ¶ Why quod the Somonour / ryde ye thanne or goon
 In sondry shape / and nat alwey in oon?
 ¶ ffor we quod he / wol vs swiche formes make
 As moost able is / oure preyes for to take 1472

¶ What maketh yow / to han al this labour
 ¶ fful many a cause / leeuē sire Somonour
 Seyde this feend / but alle thyng hath tyme
 The day is short' and it is passed pryme 1476
 And yet' ne wan I no-thing' in this day
 I wol entende / to wynnen if I may
 And nat entende / hir wittes to declare
 ffor brother myn / thy wit is al to bare 1480
 To vnderstonde / al-thogh I tolde hem thee
 But for thou axest' why labouren we
 ffor som tyme / we been goddes Instrumentz
 And meenes / to doon hise comandementz 1484
 Whan that hym list' vp-on his creatures
 In diuers art' and in diuerse figures
 With-uten hym / we haue no myght certayn
 If that hym list' to stonden ther agayn 1488
 And som tyme / at oure prayere / han we leue
 Oonly the body / and nat the soule greue
 Witnesse on Iob / whom that we diden wo
 And som tyme / han we myght' of bothe two 1492
 This is to seyn / of soule and body eke
 And somtyme / be we suffred for to seke
 Vp-on a man / and doon his soule vnreste
 And nat his soule / and al is for the beste 1496
 Whan he withstandeth oure temptacioun
 It is / cause / of his sauacioun [leaf 83]
 Al be it' that it was nat oure entente
 He sholde be sauf' but þat we wolde hym hente 1500
 And som tyme / be we seruant vn-to man
 As to the Bissnopē / Seint Dunstan
 And to the Apostles / seruante eek was .I.
 ¶ Yet tel me / quod the Somonour feithfully 1504
 Make ye yow newe bodies / thus alway
 Of Elementz^s the feend answerde nay /
 Som tyme we feyne / and som tyme we aryse
 With dede bodyes / in ful sondry wyse 1508

And speke as renably / and faire and wel
 As to the Phitonissa / dide Samuel
 And yet wol som men seye / it was nat he
 I do no fors / of youre dyuynytee 1512
 But o thyng warne I thee / I wol nat Iape
 Thou wolt algates / wite how we been shape
 Thou shalt herafterwardes / my brother deere
 Come there / thee nedeth nat^t of me to leere 1516
 ffor thou shalt by thyn owene experience
 Konne in a chayer / rede of this sentence
 Bet than Virgile / while he was on lyue
 Or Dant also / now lat vs ryde blyue 1520
 ffor I wole / holde compaignye with thee
 Til it be so / that thou forsake me
 ¶ Nay quod this Somonour / that shal nat bityde
 I am a yeman / knowen is ful wyde 1524
 My trouthe wol I holde / as in this cas
 ffor though thou were / the deuel Sathanas
 My trouthe wol I holde / to my brother
 As I am sworn / and ech of vs til oother 1528
 ffor to be trewe brother / in this cas
 And bothe we goon / abouten oure purchas
 Taak thou thy part^t what þat men wol thee yeue
 And I shal myn / thus may we bothe lyue 1532
 And if þat any of vs / haue moore than oother
 Lat hym be trewe / and parte it with his brother
 ¶ I graunte quod the deuel / by my fey
 And with that word / they ryden forth hir wey 1536
 And right at the entryng^t of the townes ende
 To which this Somonour / shoope hym for to wende
 They saugh a Cart^t that charged was with hey
 Which þat a Cartere / droof forth in his wey 1540
 Deepe was the wey / for which the Carte stood
 The Cartere smoot^t and cryde / as he were wood
 Hayt Brok / hayt Scot^t what spare ye for the stones
 The feend quod he / yow fecche body and bones 1544


As ferforthly / as euere were ye foled [leaf 83, back]
 So muche wo / as I haue with yow tholed
 The deuel haue al / bothe hors and Cart and hey
 ¶ This Somonour seyde / heere shal we haue a pley 1548
 And neer the feend he drough / as noght ne were
 fful priuely / and rowned in his ere
 Herkne my brother / herkne by thy feith
 Herestow nat how þat the Cartere seith 1552
 Hent it anon / for he hath yeue it thee
 Bothe hey and Cart and eek hise caples thre
 ¶ Nay quod the deuel / god woot neuer a deel
 It is nat his entente / trust thou me weel 1556
 Axe hym thy self if thou nat trowest me
 Or elles stynt a while / and thou shalt see
 ¶ This Cartere / taketh his hors on the croupe
 And they bigonne drawen and to stoupe 1560
 Heyt now quod he / ther Ihesu crist yow blesse
 And al his handwerk bothe moore and lesse
 That was wel twight myn owene lyard boy
 I pray to god saue thee / and seint loy 1564
 Now is my Cart out of the slow pardee
 ¶ Lo brother quod the feend / what tolde I thee
 Heere may ye se / myn owene deere brother
 The carl spak oon / but he thoghte another 1568
 Lat vs go forth / abouten oure viage
 Heere / wynne I no thynge vp-on cariage
 ¶ Whan that they coomen / som-what out of towne
 This Somonour / to his brother gan to rowne 1572
 Brother quod he / heere woneth an old rebekke
 That hadde almost as lief to lese hire nekke
 As for to yeue / a peny of hir good
 I wole han .xij. pens / though þat she be wood 1576
 Or I wol sompne hire / vn-to oure office
 And yet god woot of hire knowe I no vice
 But for thou kanst nat as in this contree
 Wynne thy cost taak heer ensample of me 1580

- ¶ This *Somonour* / clappeth at the wydwes gate
 Com out quod he / thou olde virytrate
 I trowe thou hast som frere / or preest *with* thee
- ¶ Who clappeth seyde this wyf benedicitee 1584
 God saue you sire / what is youre sweete wille?
- ¶ I haue quod he / of somonce a bille
 Vp-on peyne of cursyng^t looke þat thou be
 Tomorn / bifore the Erchedeknes knee 1588
 Tanswere to the court^t of certeyn thynges
- ¶ Now lord quod she / crist Ihesu kyng of kynges
 So wisly helpe me / as I ne may
 I haue been syk / and that ful many a day 1592
 I may nat go so fer quod she ne ryde [leaf 84]
 But I be deed / so priketh it in my syde
 May I nat axe a libel / sire *Somonour*
 And answeere there / by my *procutour* 1596
 To swich thyng^t as men wole opponen me?
- ¶ Yis quod this *Somonour* / pay anon lat se
 Twelf pens to me / and I wol thee acquite
 I shal no profit^t han ther-by / but lite 1600
 My maister hath the profit^t and nat I
 Com of / and lat me ryden hastily
 Yif me .xij. pens / I may no lenger tarye
- ¶ Twelf pens quod she /^s now lady Seinte Marie 1604
 So wisly help me god / out of care and synne
 This wyde world / thoghⁿ þat I sholde wynne
 Ne haue I nat .xij. pens *with-Inne* myn hood^t
 Ye knowen wel / that I am poure and oold^t 1608
 Kithe youre Almesse / on me poure wrecche
- ¶ Nay thanne quod he / the foule feend me fecche
 If I thexcuse / though thou shul be spilt^t
- ¶ Allas quod she / god woot^t I haue no gilt^t 1612
- ¶ Pay me quod he / or by the sweete seinte Anne
 As I / wol bere away thy newe panne
 ffor dette / which that thou owest me of old^t
 Whan þat thou madest^t thyn housbonde cokewold^t 1616

- I payde at hoom / for thy correccioun
 ¶ Thou lixt quod she / by my sauacioun
 Ne was I neuere er now / wydwe ne wyf
 Somoned vn-to youre court' in al my lyf 1620
 Ne neuere I nas / but of my body trewe
 Vn-to the deuel / blak' and rough of hewe
 Yeue I thy body / and my panne also
 ¶ And whan the deuel / herde hire cursen so 1624
 Vp-on hir knees / he seyde in this manere
 Now Mabely / myn owene moder deere
 Is this youre wyl / in ernest þat ye seye?
 ¶ The deuel quod she / so fecche hym er he deye 1628
 And panne and al / but he wol hym repente
 ¶ Nay olde Stot' that is nat myn entente.
 Quod this Somonour / for to repente me
 ffor any thyng' that I haue had of thee 1632
 I wolde I hadde thy smok and euery clooth
 ¶ Now brother quod the deuel / be nat wrooth
 Thy body and this panne / been myne by right'
 Thou shalt with me to helle / yet to-nyght' 1636
 Where / thou shalt knowen / of oure priuete
 Moore / than a maister of dyuynytee
 And with that word / this foule feend hym hente
 Body and soule / he with the deuel wente 1640
 Where as that Somonours / han hir heritage [leaf 84, back]
 And god / þat made / after his ymage
 Mankynde / saue and gyde vs alle and some
 And leue thise Somonours / goode men bicome 1644
L Ordynges / I koude han toold yow quod this frere
 Hadde I had leyser / for this Somnour heere
 After the text' of Crist/ Poul / and Iohn
 And of oure othere doctours many oon 1648
 Swiche peynes / that youre herte myghte agryse
 Al be it so / no tonge may it deuyse
 Thogh þat I myghte / a thousand wynter telle
 The peynes / of thilke cursed hous of helle 1652

But for to kepe vs / fro that cursed place
 Waketh / and preyeth Ihesu for his grace
 So kepe vs / fro the temptour Sathanas
 Herketh this word / beth war/ as in this cas 1656
 The leoun sit^t in his awayt alway
 To sle the Innocent/ if that he may
 Disposeth ay / youre hertes to withstonde
 The feend^t / þat yow wolde make / thral *and* bonde 1660
 He may nat tempte yow / ouer youre mygh^t
 ffor crist wol be / youre champion and knyght^t
 And prayeth / þat thise Somonours hem repente
 Of hir mysdedes / er þat the feend hem hente^s 1664

¶ Heere endeth the ffreres tale ॐ

¶ The prologe / of the Somonours tale  [on leaf 84, back]

THis Somonour / in his Styropes hye stood
 Vp-on this frere / his herte was so wood
 That lyk an Aspen leef / he quook for Ire

¶ Lordynges quod he / but o thyng I desire 1668
 I yow biseke / that of youre curteisye
 Syn ye han herd / this false frere lye
 As suffereth me / I may my tale telle
 This frere bosteth / that he knoweth helle 1672
 And god it woot that it is litel wonder
 ffreres and feendes / been but lyte a-sonder
 ffor pardee / ye han ofte tyme herd telle
 How that a frere / vanysshed was to helle 1676
 In spirit ones / by a visioun
 And as an Angel / ladde hym vp and doun
 To shewen hym / the peynes þat ther were
 In al the place / saugh he nat a frere 1680
 Of oother/ folk / he saugh ynowe in wo [leaf 85]
 Vn-to this Angel / spak the frere tho

¶ Now sire quod he / han freres swich a grace
 That noon of hem / shal come to this place? 1684

¶ Yis quod this Angel / many a Millioun
 And vn-to Sathanas / he ladde hym doun
 And now hath Sathanas / seith he a tayl
 Brodder/ than of a Carryk/ is the sayl 1688
 Hold vp thy tayl / thou Sathanas quod he
 Shewe forth thyn ers / and lat the frere se
 Where is the nest of freres / in this place
 And er/ þat half a furlong wey of space 1692

Right so as bees / out swarmen from an hyue	
Out of the deueles ers / ther gonne dryue	
Twenty thousand freres / in a route	
And thurgh-out helle / swarmeden aboute	1696
And comen agayn / as faste as they may gon	
And in his ers / they crepten euerychon	
He clapte his tayl agayn / and lay ful stille	
This frere / whan he hadde looke al his fille	1700
Vpon the tormentz / of this sory place	
His spirit god restored of his grace	
Vn-to his body agayn / and he awook	
But natheles / for fere yet he quook	1704
So was the deueles ers / ay in his mynde	
That is his heritage / of verray kynde	
God saue yow alle / saue this cursed frere	
My prologe / wol I ende / in this manere	1708

¶ Heere bigynneth the Somonour his tale 
[on leaf 85]

L Ordynges / ther is in yorkshire / as I gesse
 A merssh contree / called Holdernesse [Painting of the
Summoner]
 In which / ther wente a lymytour aboute
 To preche / and eek to begge / it is no doute 1712
 And so bifel / that on a day / this frere
 Hadde preched at a chirche in his manere
 And specially / abouen euery thyng/
 Excited he the peple / in his prechyng' 1716
 To trentals / and to yeue for goddes sake
 Wher-with / men myghte hooly houses make
 Ther as diuine *seruyce* is honoured
 Nat ther as it is wasted and deuoured 1720
 Ne ther it nedeth nat/ for to be yeue
 As to possessioners / that mowen lyue
 Thanked be god / in wele and habundaunce [leaf 85, back]
 Trentals seyde he / deliueren fro penaunce 1724
 Hir freendes soules / as wel olde as yonge
 Ye / whan þat they been hastily ysonge
 Nat for to holde a preest Ioly and gay
 He syngeth nat' but o masse in a day 1728
 Deliuereth out quod he / anon the soules
 fful hard it is / *with* flessħhook' or *with* oules
 To been yelawed / or to brenne or bake
 Now spede yow hastily / for cristes sake 1732
 And whan this frere / had seyde al his entente
 With / *qui cum patre* / forth his wey he wente
 ¶ Whan folk in chirche / had yeue *him* / what hem lest
 He went his wey / no lenger wolde he reste 1736

With scrippe and tipped staf/ ytukked hye
 In euery hous / he gan to poure and pryce
 And beggeth mele / and chese / or elles corn
 His felawe hadde a staf / tipped with horn 1740
 A peyre of tables / al of yuory
 And a poyntel / polysshed fetisly
 And wroote the names / alwey as he stood
 Of alle folk/ that yaf hym any good 1744
 Asaunces / that he wolde for hem prey
 Yif hym a busschel whete / Malt or Reye
 A goddes kechyl / or a trype of chese
 Or elles what yow lyst we may nat cheese 1748
 A goddes halfpeny / or a masse peny
 Or yif vs of youre brawn / if ye haue eny
 A dagon of youre blanket leue dame
 Oure suster deere / lo heere I write youre name 1752
 Bacon or beef/ or swich thyng as ye fynde
 ¶ A sturdy harlot/ wente ay hem bihynde
 That was hir hostes man / and bar a sak
 And what men yaf hem / leyde it on hys bak 1756
 And whan þat he / was out at dore anon
 He planed away / the names euerichon
 That he biforn / had writen in his tables
 He serued hem / with nyfles and with fables 1760
 ¶ Nay ther thou lixt thou Somonour quod the frere
 ¶ Pees quod oure Hoost for cristes mooder deere
 Tel forth thy tale / and spare it nat at al
 ¶ So thryue I quod this Somonour / so I shal 1764
 ¶ So longe he wente hous by hous / til he
 Cam til an hous / ther he was wont to be
 Refresshed moore / than in an hundred placis
 Syk lay the goode man / whos the place is 1768
 Bedrede vp-on a couche lowe he lay
 Deus hic/ quod he / o Thomas freend good day
 Seyde this frere / curteisly and softe [leaf 86]
 Thomas quod he / god yelde yow / ful ofte 1772

Haue I / vp-on this bench / faren ful weel
 Heere haue I eten / many a myrie meel
 And fro the bench / he droof away the cat
 And leyde adoun / his potente and his hat' 1776
 And eek his scrippe / and sette hym softe adoun
 His felawe / was go walked in-to toun
 fforth with his knaue / in-to that hostelrye
 Where as he shoope hym / thilke nyght to lye 1780
 ¶ O deere maister / quod this sike man
 How han ye fare / sith þat March bigan^s
 I saugh yow noghit / this fourtnyght^t or moore
 God woot quod he / laboured I haue ful soore 1784
 And specially / for thy sauacion
 Haue I seyde / many a precious orison
 And for oure othere freendes / god hem blesse
 I haue to day / been at youre chirche at messe / 1788
 And seyde a sermon / after my symple wit
 Nat al after / the text of hooly writ /
 ffor it is hard to yow / as I suppose
 And therefore / wol I teche yow al the glose 1792
 Glosynge / is a glorious thyng certeyn
 ffor lettre sleeth / so as thise clerkes seyn
 ¶ *Litera occidit
& cetera*
 There haue I taught hem to be charitable
 And spende hir good / ther it is resonable 1796
 And there I saugh oure dame / a where is she^s
 ¶ Yond in the yer^t / I trowe þat she be
 Seyde this man / and she wol come anon
 ¶ Ey maister / wel come be ye / by seint Iohn 1800
 Seyde this wyf / how fare ye hertely^s
 ¶ The frere ariseth vp ful curteisly
 And hire embraceth in his Armes narwe
 And kiste hire sweete / and chirteth as a sparwe 1804
 With his lypes / . dame quod he right weel^s
 As he / that is youre seruant euery deel
 Thanked be god / þat yow yaf soule and lyf
 Yet saugh I nat this day / so fair a wyf 1808

In al the chirche / god so saue me
 ¶ Ye / god amende defautes / sire quod she
 Algates / wel come be ye / by my fey
 Graunt *mercy* dame / this haue I founde alwey 1812
 But of youre grete goodnesse / by youre leue
 I wolde prey yow / þat ye nat yow greue
 I wole with Thomas speke a litel throwe
 This curatz / been ful necligent and slowe 1816
 To grope tendrely a conscience
 In shrift in *prechyng* is my diligence
 And studie / in Petres wordes / and in Poules [leaf 86, back]
 I walke / and fisshe cristen mennes soules 1820
 To yelden Ihesu crist / his propre rente
 To sprede his word / is set al myn entente
 ¶ Now by youre leue / o deere sire quod she
 Chideth him weel / for seinte Trinitee 1824
 He is as angry / as a pissemyre
 Though þat he haue / al that he kan desire
 Though I him wrye a-nyght / and make hym warm
 And on hym leye my leg^r outhur myn Arm 1828
 He groneth lykoure boor / lith inoure sty
 Oother desport^r ryght noon of hym haue I
 I may nat plese hym / in no maner cas
 ¶ O Thomas / Ie vous dy / Thomas / Thomas 1832
 This maketh the feend / this moste ben amended
 Ire is a thyng^r that hye god defended
 And ther-of / wol I speke a word or two
 ¶ Now maister quod the wyf^r er þat I go 1836
 What wol ye dyne /? I wol go ther-about
 ¶ Now dame quod he / Ie vous dy sanz doute
 Haue I nat of a capon / but the lyuere
 And of youre softe breed / nat but a shyuere 1840
 And after that a rosted pigges heed
 But that I nolde / no beest for me were deed
 Thanne hadde I with yow hoomly suffisaunce
 I am a man / of litel sustenaunce 1844

My spirit hath his fostryng' in the Bible
 The body is ay / so redy and penyble
 To wake / that my stomak is destroyed
 I prey yow dame / ye be nat anoyed 1848
 Though I so freendly / yow my conseil shewe
 By god / I wolde nat telle it' but a fewe
 ¶ Now sire quod she / but o word er I go
 My child is deed / with-Inne thise wykes two 1852
 Soone after / þat ye wente out of this toun
 ¶ His deeth / saugh I by reuelacioun
 Seith this frere / at hoom in oure dortour
 I dar wel seyn / that er þat half an hour 1856
 After his deeth / I saugh hym born to blisse
 In myn Avision / so god me wisse
 So dide our Sexteyn / and oure ffermerer
 That han been trewe freres / fifty yeer 1860
 They may now / god be thanked of his loone
 Maken hir Iubilee / and walke allone
 And vp I roos / and al oure Couent eke
 With many a teare / triklyng' on my cheke 1864
 Withouten noyse / or claterynge of belles
 Te *deum* was oure song' and no thyng elles
 Saue / that to crist' I seyde an orison [leaf 87]
 Thankyng hym / of his reuelacion 1868
 ffor sire and dame / trusteth me right weel
 Oure orisons / been wel moore effectueel
 And moore we seen / of cristes secree thynges
 Than burel folk/ al though they weren kynges 1872
 We lyue in pouerte / and in abstinence
 And burel folk / in richesse and despence
 Of mete and drynke / and in hir foul delit'
 We han this worldes lust' al in despit/ 1876
 Lazar and diues / lyueden diuersly
 And diuerse gerdon / hadden they ther-by
 Who so wol preye / he moot faste and be clene
 And fatte his soule / and make his body lene

*Melius est animam
 saginare quam
 corpus*

We fare as seith thapostle / clooth and foode	¶ Victum & vestitum / hiis contenti sumus & cetera	
Suffisen vs / though they be nat ful goode		
The clenness and the fastynge of vs freres		
Maketh / þat crist accepteth oure preyeres		1884
¶ Lo Moyses / fourty dayes / and fourty nyght	¶ de orationibus & Ieiunijs	
ffasted / er þat the heighe god of myght		
Spak with hym / in the mount of Synay		
With empty wombe / fastynge many a day		1888
Receyued he the lawe / that was writen		
With goddes fynger / and Elye wel ye witen		
In mount Oreb / er he hadde any speche		
With hye god / that is oure lyues leche		1892
He fasted longe / and was in contempraunce		
¶ Aaron / that hadde the temple in gouernaunce		
And eek / that othere preestes euerichon		
In-to the temple / whan they sholde gon		1896
To preye for the peple / and do seruyse		
They nolden drynken / in no maner wyse		
No drynke / which þat myghte hem dronke make		
But there / in abstynence preye and wake		1900
Lest that they deyden / taak heede what I seye		
But they be sobre / that for the peple preye		
War that / I seye namoore / for it suffiseth		
Oure lord Ihesu / as hooly writ deuyseth		1904
Yaf vs ensample / of fastynge and preyeres		
Therefore / we mendynantz / we sely freres		
Been wedded / to pouerte and continence		
To charite / humblesse / and abstynence		1908
To persecucioñ / for rightwisnesse		
To wepyng / Misericorde and clenness		
And therefore may ye se / þat oure preyeres		
I speke of vs / we mendynantz we freres		1912
Been to the hye god / moore acceptable		
Than youres / with youre feestes at the table		
ffro Paradys first / if I shal nat lye	[leaf 87, back]	
Was man out chaced / for his glotonye		1916

And chaast was man / in Paradys certeyn
 ¶ But herkne Thomas / what I shal seyn
 I ne haue no text of it/ as I suppose
 But I shal fynde it/ in a maner glose 1920
 That specially / oure sweete lord Ihesus
 Spak this by freres / whan he seyde thus
 ¶ Blessed be they / that pouere in spirit been
 And so forth / al the gospel / may ye seen 1924
 Wher it be likker / oure professioun
 Or hers / that swymmen in possessioun
 ffy on hire pompe / and hire glotonye
 And for hir lewednesse / I hem diffye 1928
 ¶ Me thynketh / they been lyk Iovinyan
 fiat as a whale / and walkynge as a swan
 Al vinolent^t as Botel in the spence
 Hir preyere / is of ful greet reuerence 1932
 Whan they for soules / seye the psalm^d of Dauit/
 Lo / but they seye / cor meum eructauit/
 Who folweth / cristes gospel / and his foore^s
 But we þat humble been / and chaast^t and poore 1936
 Werkeris of goddes word / not Auditours
 Therefore / right^t as an hauk^t vp at a sours
 Vp springeth in-to their / right so prayeres
 Of charitable / and chaste bisy freres 1940
 Maken hir sours / to goddes eres two
 Thomas Thomas / so moote I ryde or go
 And by that lord / þat clepid is seint Yue
 Nere thou oure brother / sholdestou nat thryue 1944
 In our Chapitre / praye we day and nyght^t
 To crist/ þat he thee sende / heele and myght^t
 Thy body / for to weelden hastily
 ¶ God woot^t quod he / no thyng ther-of feele I 1948
 As help me crist^t as in a fewe yeres
 I han spent / vp-on diuerse manere freres
 fful many a pound^t / yet fare I neuer the bet^t
 Certeyn my good / I haue almost biset^t 1952

- farwel my gold / for it is al ago
 ¶ The frere answerde / o Thomas dostow so?
 What nedeth yow / diuerse freres seche
 What nedeth hym / þat hath a parfit leche 1956
 To sechen / othere leches in the toun?
 Youre inconstance / is youre confusioun
 Holde ye thanne me / or elles oure Couent'
 To praye for yow / been insufficient?
 Thomas that Iape / nys nat' worth a myte 1960
 Youre maladye / is for we han to lyte
 A yif that Couent/ half a quarter otes [deaf 88]
 A yif that Couent/ .xxiiij. grotes 1964
 A yif that frere a peny / and lat hym go
 Nay nay Thomas / it may no thyng be so
 What is a ferthyng' worth / parted in twelue
 Lo ech thyng' that is oned / in it selue Omnis virtus vnita / forcior
est seipsa dispersa
 Is moore strong' than whan it is toscatered
 Thomas / of me / thou shalt nat been yflatered
 Thou woldest han oure labour al for noght'
 The hye god / that al this world hath wroght' 1972
 Seith that the werkman / worthy is his hyre ¶ Dignus est operarius.
mercede & oetera
 Thomas / noght' of youre tresor I desire
 As for my self' but that al oure Couent'
 To preye for yow / is ay so diligent' 1976
 And for to buylden / cristes owene chirche
 Thomas / if ye wol lernen for to wirche
 Of buyldynge vp of chirches / may ye fynde
 If it be good / in Thomas lyf of Inde 1980
 Ye lye heere / ful of Anger of Ire
 With which / the deuel set youre herte afyre
 And chiden heere / the sely Innocent'
 Youre wyf/ that is so meke and pacient' 1984
 And therefore Thomas / trowe me if thee leste
 Ne stryue nat with thy wyf/ as for thy beste
 And ber this word away / now by thy feith
 Touchynge this thyng' lo what the wise seith 1988

- ¶ With-Inne thyn hous ne be thou no leoun ¶ Noll esse sicut leo
 To thy subgitz / do noon oppressioun in domo tua / euertens
 Ne make thyne aqueyntances / nat for to flee domesticos tuos op-
 And Thomas / yet eft-soones I charge thee 1992 primens sublectos
 Be war from hire / þat in thy bosom slepeth tibi.
 Be war/ fro the serpent/ that so silyly crepeth
 Vnder the gras / and styngeth subtilly
 Be war my sone / and herkne patiently 1996
 That twenty thousand men / han lost hir lyues
 ffor stryuyng' with hir lemmans and hir wyues
 Now sith ye han / so hooly meke a wyf
 What nedeth yow Thomas / to maken stryf' 2000
 Ther nys ywys / no serpent so cruel
 What man tret' on his tayl / ne half so fel
 As womman is / whan she hath caught an Ire
 Vengeance is thanne / al that they desire 2004
 Ire is a synne / oon of the grete of seuene
 Abhomynable / vn-to the god of heuene
 And to hym self/ it is destruccion
 This euery lewed viker or person 2008
 Kan seye / how Ire engendreth homicide
 Ire is in sooth / executour of pryde
 I koude of Ire seye / so muche sorwe [leaf 88, back]
 My tale / sholde laste / til tomorwe 2012
 And therefore / preye I god / bothe day and nyght'
 An Irous man / god sende hym litel myght'
 It is greet harm / and eek greet pitee
 To sette an Irous man / in heigh degree 2016
WHilom / ther was an Irous potestat/ ¶ de quodam potes-
 As seith Senek' that durynge his estaat' tate iracundo
 Vp-on a day / out ryden knyghtes two
 And as ffortune / wolde that it were so 2020
 That oon of hem cam hoom/ that oother noght'
 Anon the knyght' bifore the Iuge is broght
 That seyde thus / thou hast thy felawe slayn
 ffor which / I deme thee to the deeth certayn 2024

And to another knyght comanded he
 Go lede hym to the deeth / I charge thee
 And happed / as they wente by the weye
 Toward the place / ther he sholde deye 2028
 The knyght cam / which men wenden had be deed
 Thanne thoughte they / it was the beste reed
 To lede hem bothe / to the Iuge agayn
 They seiden lord / the knyght ne hath nat slayn 2032
 His felawe / heere he standeth hool alyue
 Ye shul be deed quod he / so moot I thryue
 That is to seyn / bothe oon / and two / and thre
 And to the firste knyght right thus spak he 2036
 I dampned thee / thou most algate be deed
 And thou also / most nedes lese thyn heed
 ffor thou art cause / why thy felawe deyth
 And to the thridde knyght right thus he seith 2040
 Thou hast nat doon / that I comanded thee
 And thus / he dide doon sleen hem alle thre
Irous Cambises / was eek dronkelewe
 And ay delited hym / to been a shrewe 2044
 And so bifel / a lord of his meynee
 That loued vertuous moralitee
 Seyde on a day / bitwene hem two right thus
 ¶ A lord is lost if he be vicius 2048
 And dronkenesse / is eek / a foul record
 Of any man / and namely in a lord
 Ther is ful many an eye and many an ere
 Awaityng on a lord / and he noot where 2052
 ffor goddes loue / drynk moore attemprely
 Wyn maketh man / to lesen wrecchedly
 His mynde / and hise lymes euerichon
 ¶ The reuers shaltou se / quod he anon 2056
 And preene it by thyn owene experience
 That wyn / ne dooth to folk no swich offence
 Ther is no wyn / bireueth me my myght [leaf 89]
 Of hand ne foot / ne of myne eyen sight 2060

- And for despit/ he drank' ful muchel moore
 An hondred part/ than he hadde bifoore
 And right anon / this Irous cursed wrecche
 Leet/ this knyghtes sone / bifore hym fecche 2064
 Comandyng hym / he sholde bifore hym stonde
 And sodeynly / he took his bowe in honde
 And vp the streng' he pulled to his ere
 And with an arwe / he slow the child right there 2068
 Now / wheither haue I / a siker hand or noon
 Quod he / is al my mygh't' and mynde agon
 Hath wyn bireft' me myne eyen sight'
 ¶ What sholde I telle / thanswere of the knygh't' 2072
 His sone was slayn / ther is namoore to seye
 Beth war therefore / with lordes how ye pleye
 Syngeth Placebo / and I shal if I kan
 But if it be / vn-to a poure man 2076
 To a poure man / men sholde hise vices telle
 But nat to a lord / thogh' he sholde go to helle
LO Irous Cirus / thilke Percien
LHow he destroyed / the ryuer of Gysen 2080
 ffor that an hors of his was dreynt ther-Inne
 Whan þat he wente / Babiloigne to wynne
 He made / that the Ryuer / was so smal
 That wommen / myglte wade it ouer al 2084
 Lo what seyde he / that so wel teche kan
 Ne be no felawe to an Irous man
 Ne *wit*h no wood man / walke by the weye
 Lest thee repente / ther is namoore to seye 2088
NOw Thomas leeu brother / lef thyn Ire
NThou shalt me fynde / as Iust/ as is a squyre
 Hoold nat the deueles knyf' ay at thyn herte
 Thyn angre dooth thee / al to soore smerte 2092
 But shewe to me / al thy confессиō
 ¶ Nay quod the sike man / by Seint Symon
 I haue be shryuen this day / at my curat'
 I haue hym toold hoolly al myn estat' 2096

Nedeth namoore / to speken of it seith he
 But if me list/ of myn humylitee
 ¶ Yif me thanne of thy gold / to make oure cloystre
 Quod he / for many a Muscle / and many an oystre 2100
 Whan othere men / han ben ful wel at eyse
 Hath been oure foode / our cloystre for to reyse
 And yet god woot vnnethe the fundement
 Parfourned is / ne of our pauement 2104
 Nys nat a tyl yet/ with-Inne oure wones
 By god / we owen fourty pound for stones
 ¶ Now help Thomas / for hym that harwed helle [leaf 89, back]
 ffor elles / moste we oure bookes selle 2108
 And if ye lakke / oure predicacion
 Thanne goth the world / al to destruccioñ
 ffor who so wolde / vs fro this world bireue
 So god me saue / Thomas by youre leue 2112
 He wolde bireue / out of this world the sonne
 ffor who kan teche / and werchen as we konne
 And that is nat' of litel tyme quod he
 But syn Ennok was / or Elise 2116
 Han freres been / that fynde I of record
 In charitee / ythanked be oure lord
 Now Thomas / helpe for seinte charitee
 And down anon / he sette hym on his knee 2120
THis sike man / wax wel ny wood for Ire
 He wolde / þat the frere / had been on fire
 With his false dissymulacion
 Swich thyng' as is in my possession 2124
 Quod he / that may I yeuen / and noon oother
 Ye sey me thus / that I am youre brother
 ¶ Ye certes quod the frere / trusteth weel
 I took oure dame / oure lettre and oure seel 2128
 ¶ Now wel quod he / and som what shal I yeue
 Vn-to youre hooly Couent' whil I lyue
 And in thyn hand / thou shalt it haue anon
 On this condicion) / and oother noon 2132

- That thou departe it so / my leeuē brother
 That euery frere / haue also mucche as oother
 This shaltou swere / on thy profession
 With-outen fraude / or caullacioñ 2136
- ¶ I swere it quod this frere / by my feith
 And ther-with-al / his hand in his he leith
 Lo heer my feith / in me shal be no lak^t
 ¶ Now thanne put In thyn hand down by my bak^t 2140
 Seyde this man / and grope wel bihynde
 Bynethe my buttock^t ther shaltow fynde
 A thyng^t that I haue hyd in pryuetee
 ¶ A thoghte this frere / this shal go *with* me 2144
 And down his hand / he launcheth to the clifte
 In hope / for to fynde there a yifte
 And whan this sike man / felte this frere
 Aboute his tuwel / grope there and heere 2148
 Amydde his hand / he leet the frere a fart^t
 Ther nys no capul / drawynge in a Cart^t
 That myghte haue lete a fart^t of swich a soun
 ¶ The frere vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun 2152
 A fals cherl quod he / for goddes bones
 This hastow for despit^t doon for the nones
 Thou shalt abyge this fart^t if that I may [leaf 90]
- ¶ His meynee / whiche that herden this affray 2156
 Cam lepyngē In / and chaced out the frere
 And forth he gooth / with a ful Angry cheere
 And fette his felawe / ther as lay his stoor
 He looked / as it were a wilde boor 2160
 He grynte with his teeth / so was he wrooth
 A sturdy paas / down to the lordes court he gooth
 Wher as woned a man / of greet honour
 To whom / that he was alwey confessour 2164
 This worthy man / was lord of that village
 This frere cam / as he were in a rage
 Where as this lord / sat etyng^t at his bord^t
 Vnnothes / myghte the frere / speke a word^t 2168

Til atte laste / he seyde / god yow see
 ¶ This lord bigan to looke / and seide benedicitee
 What frere Iohā / what maner world is this?
 I trowe / som maner thyng^t ther is amys 2172
 Ye looken / as the wode / were ful of theuys
 Sit down anon / and tel me what youre grief is
 And it shal been amended / if that I may
 ¶ I haue quod he / had a despit this Day 2176
 God yelde yow / adoun in youre village
 That in this world / is noon so poure a page
 That he nolde haue abhomynacioun
 Of that I haue receyued in youre toun 2180
 And yet greueth me / no thyng so soore
 As that this olde cherl / with lokkes hoore
 Blasphemed hath / oure hooly Couent eke
 ¶ Now maister quod this lord / I yow biseke 2184
 ¶ No maister quod he / but seruitour
 Thogh I haue had in seole swich honour
 God liketh nat^t that Raby men vs calle
 Neither in Market^t ne in youre large halle 2188
 ¶ No fors quod he / but tel me al youre grief^t
 ¶ Sire quod he / an odious meschief/
 This day bityd is / to myn ordre and me
 And so *per consequens* / in ech degree 2192
 Of hooly chirche / god amende it soone
 ¶ Sire quod the lord / ye woot what is to doone
 Distempre yow noght / ye be my Confessour
 Ye been the salt of the erthe / and the savour 2196
 ffor goddes loue / youre pacience ye holde
 Tel me youre grief / and he anon hym tolde
 As ye han herd biforn / ye woot wel what^t
 ¶ The lady of the hous / al stille sat / 2200
 Til she had herd / what the frere sayde
 Ey goddes mooder quod she / blisful mayde
 Is ther oght elles / telle me feithfully [leaf 90, back]
 ¶ Madame quod he / how thynke ye her-by?^s 2204

- ¶ How that me thynketh quod she? so god me speede
 I seye / a cherle hath doon / a cherles dede
 What shold I seye / god lat hym neuere thee
 His sike heed / is ful of vanytee 2208
 I holde hym / in a manere frenesye
- ¶ Madame quod he / by god I shal nat lye
 But I on hym / oother weyes be wreke
 I shal disclaundre hym / ouer al ther I speke 2212
 This false blasphemour / that charged me
 To parte / that wol nat departed be
 To euery man yliche / with meschaunce
- ¶ The lord sat stille / as he were in a traunce 2216
 And in his herte / he rolled vp and down
 How hadde the cherl / this ymaginacioun^s
 To shewe swich a probleme / to the frere
 Neuere erst^t er now / herd I of swich mateere 2220
 I trowe / the deuel / putte it in his mynde
 In Ars Metrik^t shal ther no man fynde
 Biforn this day / of swich a question
 Certes / it was a shrewed conclusion 2224
 That euery man / sholde haue yliche his part^t
 As of the soun / or savour / of a fart^t
 O vile proude cherl / I shrewe his face
 Lo sires quod the lord / with harde grace 2228
 Who herd euere of swich a thyng^t er now
 To euery man ylike / tel me how?
 It is an impossible / it may nat be
 Ey nyce cherl / god lete thee neuere thee 2232
 The rumblyng of a fart / and euery soun
 Nis but of Eir reuerberacioun
 And euere it wasteth / litel and litel away
 Ther is no man / kan demen by my fey 2236
 If that it were departed equally
 What lo my cherl / lo yet how shrewedly
 Vn-to my confessour / to day he spak^t
 I holde hym certeyn / a demonyak^t 2240

Now ete youre mete / and lat the cherl go pleye
 Lat hym go honge hymself a deuel weye

¶ The wordes of the lordes Squier and his keruere /
 for departyng of the fart on twelue ♀

NOW stood the lordes Squier at the bord
 That karf his mete / and herde word by word 2244

Of alle thynges / whiche that I haue sayd

My lord quod he / beth nat yuele apayd

¶ I koude telle for a gowne clooth [leaf 91]

To yow sire frere / so ye be nat wrooth 2248

How that this fart euene delt shal be

Among youre Couent if it lyked me

¶ Tel quod the lord / and thou shalt haue anon
 A gowne clooth / by god / and by Seint Ioħn 2252

¶ My lord quod he / whan þat the weder is fair

With-ouen wynd / or perturbynge of Air

Lat brynge a Cartwheel in-to this halle

But looke / that it haue his spokes alle 2256

Twelue spokes / hath a Cartwheel comunly

And bryng me thanne .xij. freres woot ye why?

For twelue is a Couent/ as I gesse

The Confessour heere / for his worthynesse 2260

Shal parfourne vp / the nombre of his Couent

Thanne shal they knele doun / by oon assent

And to euery spokes ende / in this manere

fful sadly / leye his nose shal a frere 2264

Youre noble Confessour / there god hym saue

Shal holde his nose / vpright / vnder the Naue

Thanne shal this cherl / with bely stif and toght

As any Tabour / been hyder ybroght 2268

And sette hym on the wheel / right of this Cart

Vpon the Naue / and make hym lete a fart

And ye shul seen / vp peril of my lyf/


By preue / which that is demonstratif 2272

That equally / the soun of it wol wende
 And eke the stynk' vn-to the spokes ende
 Sauē þat this worthy man youre Confessour
 By cause / he is a man of greet honour 2276
 Shal haue the firste fruyt' / as resoñ is
 As yet' the noble vsage / of freres is
 The worthy men of hem / shul first be serued
 And certainly / he hath it weel disserued 2280
 He hath to day taught' vs so muche good
 With prechyng' in the pulpit' ther he stood
 That I may vouche sauf / I sey for me
 He hadde the firste smel / of fartes three 2284
 And so wolde / al the Couent' hardily
 He bereth hym / so faire and hoolily
 ¶ The lord / the lady / and alle men saue the frere
 Seyde / þat Iankyn spak/ in this matere 2288
 As wel as Euclide / or Protholomee
 Touchynge this cherl / they seyde subtiltee
 And heigh wit' made hym speke / as he spak/
 He nys no fool / ne no demonyak' 2292
 And Iankyn / hath ywonne a newe gowne
 My tale is doon / we been almost at towne
 ¶ Heere endeth the Somonours tale 𐄂

GROUP E. FRAGMENT VI.

§ 1. THE CLERK'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMERE MS.

¶ Heere folweth the Prologe of the clerkes tale of
Oxenford^t  [leaf 91, back]

Sire clerk / of Oxenford^t / oure Hoost sayde
ye ryde as coy / and stille / as dooth a mayde
were newe spoused / sittynge at the bord
This day / ne herde I / of youre tonge a word 4
I trowe ye studie / aboute som Sophyme
But Salomon seith / euery thyng hath tyme ¶ pausacio

¶ ffor goddes sake / as beth of better cheere
It is no tyme / for to studien heere 8
Telle vs som myrie tale / by youre fey
ffor what man / that is entred in a pley
He nedes moot^t vnto the pley assente
But *pre*cheth nat^t as freres doon in lente 12
To make vs / for oure olde synnes wepe
Ne that thy tale / make vs nat to slepe ¶ pausacio

¶ Telle vs / som murie thyng/ of auentures
Youre *termes* / youre colours / and youre figures 16
Keepe hem in stoor / til so be that ye endite
Heigh style / as whan *pat* men to kynges write
Speketh so pleyn / at this tyme we yow preye 19
That we may vnderstonde what ye seye ¶ pausacio

¶ This worthy clerk^t benignely answerde
Hoost quod he / I am vnder youre yerde
Ye han of vs / as now the gouernance
And therefore / wol I do yow obeisance 24

As fer/ as resoñ axeth hardily
 I wol yow telle a tale / which that I^s
 Lerned at Padwe / of a worthy clerk'
 As preued / by his wordes and his werk' 28
 He is now deed / and nayled in his cheste
 I prey to god / so yeue his soule reste ¶ pausacio

¶ ffraunceys Pe[t]rak' the lauriat poete
 Highte this clerk' whos Rethorik' sweete 32
 Enlumyned al Ytaille of poetrie
 As Lynyan dide / of Philosophie
 Or lawe / or oother Art particuler'
 But deeth / þat wol nat dwellen heer 36
 But as it were / a twynklyng' of an eye
 Hem bothe hath slayn / and alle shul we dye ¶ pausacio

¶ But forth to tellen / of this worthy man [leaf 92]
 That taughte me this tale / as I bigan [Latin note, p. 402] 40
 I seye / that first' with heigh stile he enditeth
 Er he / the body of his tale writeth
 A prohemye / in the which discryueth he
 Pemonð / and of Saluces the contree 44
 And speketh of Apennyn / the hilles hye
 That been the boundes / of westlumbardye ¶ pausacio

¶ And of Mount Vesulus / in special
 Where as the poo / out of a welle smal 48
 Taketh his firste spryngyng' and his sours
 That Estward / ay encreseth in his cours
 To Emeleward' / to fferrare and Venyse
 The which a long' thyng' were to deuyse 52
 And trewely / as to my Iuggement'
 Me thyñketh it' a thyng' impertinent'
 Saue that he wole / conuoyen his mateere
 But this his tale / which that ye may heere ¶ pausacio

[For the Latin side-notes to the Clerk's Tale see pp. 274-5 at the end of the Tale.]

¶ Heere bigynneth the tale of the Clerk/
Oxenford

[on leaf 92]

THer is / at the West syde of Ytaille [*Latin note, p. 402*]
Doun at the roote / of Vesulus the colde
A lusty playne / habundant of vitaille ¶ *grata planicies*
Where many a tour and toun / thou mayst biholde
That founded were / in tyme / of fadres olde
And many another / delitable sighte
And Saluces this noble contree highte 63

A Markys / whilom lord was of that lond 64
As were / hise worthy elders hym bifore
And obeisant and redy to his hond
Were alle hise liges / bothe lasse and moore 67
Thus in delit he lyueth / and hath doon yoore
Biloued and drad / thurgh favour of ffortune
Bothe of hise lordes / and of his commune 70

[Painting of the Clerk on Horseback]

Therwith he was / to speke as of lynage 71
The gentilleste yborn of lumbardy
A fair persone and strong and yong of age
And ful [of] honour / and of curteisye 74
Discreet ynogh / his contree for to gye
Saue that in somme thynges / þat he was to blame
And Walter / was this yonge lordes name 77

I blame hym thus / that he considereth noght [*lf 92, bk*]
In tyme comynge / what hym myghte bityde
But in his lust present was al his thoght
As for to hauke and hunte / on euery syde 81
Wel ny / alle othere cures / leet he slyde
And eek he nolde / and that was worst of alle
Wedde no wyf / for noght þat may bifalle 84

Only that point his peple bar so soore	85
That flokmeele on a day / they to hym wente	¶ Cateruatim
And oon of hem / that wisest was of loore	
Or elles / that the lord / best wolde assente	88
That he sholde telle hym / what his peple mente	
Or elles / koude he shewe wel swich mateere	
He to the Markys / seyde as ye shul heere	91
¶ O noble Markys / youre humanitee	¶ Tua inquit humanitas optime Marchio
Assureth vs / to yeue vs hardinesse	
As ofte / as tyme is of necessitee	
That we to yow / mowe telle oure heuynesse	95
Accepteth lord / now for youre gentillesse	
That we with pitous herte / vn-to yow pleyne	
And lat youre eres / nat my voys desdeyne	98
Al haue I nought to doone / in this mateere	99
Moore than another man / hath in this place	
Yet for as muche / as ye my lord so deere	
Han alwey / shewed me / fauour and grace	102
I dar the bettre / aske of yow a space	
Of Audience / to shewen oure requeste	
And ye my lord / to doon right as yow leste	105
ffor certes lord / so wel vs liketh yow	106
And al youre werk / and euere han doon / þat we s	
Ne koude nat vs self deuysen how s	
We myghte lyuen / in moore felicitee	109
Saue o thyng lord / if youre wille be	
That for to been a wedded man yow leste	
Thanne were youre peple / in souereyn hertes reste	112
Boweth youre nekke / vnder that blisful yok /	113
Of soueraynetee / noght of seruyse	
Which þat men clepeth / spousaille or wedlok	
And thenketh lord / among youre thoghtes wyse	116

How þat oure dayes passe / in sondry wyse
 ffor thogh̄ we slepe / or wake / or rome / or ryde
 Ay fleeth the tyme / it nyl no man abyde 119

And thogh̄ youre grene youthe / floure as yit^t [leaf 93]
 In crepeth age alwey / as stille as stoon
 And deeth manaceth / euery age and smyt^t
 In ech estaat^t for ther escapeth noon 123
 And al so certein / as we knowe echoon
 That we shul deye / as vncerteyn / we alle^s
 Been of that day / whan deeth shal on vs falle 126

Accepteth thanne of vs / the trewe entente 127
 That neuere yet^t refuseden thyn heeste
 And we wol lord / if that ye wole assente
 Chese yow a wyf / in short tyme atte leeste 130
 Born of the gentilleste / and of the meeste
 Of al this land^t / so that it oghte seme
 Honour to god and yow / as we kan deeme 133

Deliuere vs / out of al this bisy drede 134
 And taak a wyf for hye goddes sake
 ffor if it so bifelle / as god forbede
 That thurgh̄ youre deeth / youre lyne sholde slake 137
 And that a straunge Successour sholde take
 Youre heritage / o wo were vs alyue
 Wherefore / we pray you hastily to wyue 140

¶ Hir meeke preyere / and hir pitous cheere 141
 Made the Markys herte / han pitee
 Ye wol quod he / myn owene peple deere
 To that I neuere erst thoughte / streyne me 144
 I me reioysed / of my liberte
 That seelde tyme / is founde in mariage
 Ther I was free / I moot been in seruage 147

But natheles / I se youre trewe entente	148
And truste vpon youre wit / and haue doon ay	
Wherfore / of my free wyl / I wole assente	
To wedde me / as soone as euere I may	151
But ther as ye / han profred me this day	
To chese me a wyf / I yow relese	
That choys / and prey of that profre cesse	154
ffor god it woot that children ofte been	155
Vnlyk hir worthy eldres hem bifore	
Bountee comth al of god / nat of the streen	
Of which / they been engendred and ybore	158
I truste in goddes bontee / and therfore ^s	
My mariage / and myn estaat and reste	
I hym bitake / he may doon as hym leste	161
Lat me allone / in chesyng of my wyf ^t	[leaf 83, back]
That charge / vp on my bak / I wole endure	
But I yow preye / and charge vp on youre lyf ^t	
What wyf that I take / ye me assure	165
To worshipe hire / whil that hir lyf may dure	
In word and werk / bothe heere and euerywhere	
As she / an Emperoures doghter weere	168
And forthermoore / this shal ye swere / that ye ^s	169
Agayn my choys / shul neither grucche ne stryue	
ffor sith / I shal / forgoon my libertee	
At youre requeste / as euere moot I thryue	172
Ther as myn herte is set ther wol I wyue	
And but ye wole assente in this manere	
I prey yow / speketh namoore of this matere	175
¶ With bertely wyl / they sworn and assenten	176
To al this thyng ther seyde no wight nay	
Bisekyng hym of grace / er that they wenten	
That he / wolde graunten hem a certein day	179

Of his spousaille / as soone / as euere he may
 ffor yet alwey / the peple som what dredde
 Lest þat this Markys / no wyf' wolde wedde. 182

¶ He graunted hem a day / swich as hym leste 183
 On which / he wolde be wedded sikerly
 And seyde / he dide al this at hir requeste
 And they / with humble entente / buxomly 186
 Knelynge vp on hir knees ful reuerently
 Hym thonken alle / and thus they han an ende
 Of hire entente / and hoom agayn they wende 189

¶ And heer vp on / he to hise officeres 190
 Comaundeth / for the feste to purveye
 And to hise priuee knyghtes and squieres
 Swich charge yaf / as hym liste on hem leye, 193
 And they / to his comandement obeye
 And ech of hem / dooth al his diligence
 To doon / vn-to the feeste reuerence 196

¶ Explicit/ prima pars 𐝰

¶ Incipit/ secunda pars 𐝰

[leaf 94]

NOghit fer / fro thilke paleys honorable [*Latin note, p. 402*]
 Ther as this Markys / shoope his mariage
 There stood a throope / of site delitable
 In which / that poure folk/ of that village 200
 Hadden hir beestes / and hir herbergage
 And of hire labour / tooke hir sustenance
 After that the erthe / yaf hem habundance 203
 Amonges thise poure folk/ ther dwelte a man 204
 Which þat was holden / pourest of hem alle
 But hye god / som tyme senden kan
 His grace / in to a litel oxes stalle 207
 Ianicula / men of that throope hym calle
 A doghter hadde he / fair ynogh to sighte
 And Grisildis / this yonge mayden highte 210

But for to speke / of vertuous bountee	211
Thanne was she / oon the faireste vnder sonne	
ffor poureliche / yfostred vp was she	
No likerous lust / was thurgh hire herte yronne	214
Wel offer / of the welle / than of the tonne	
She drank / and for she wolde vertu plesse	
She knew wel labour / but noon ydel ese	217
But thogh this mayde / tendre were of age	218
Yet in the brest of hire virginitee	
Ther was enclosed / rype and sad corage	
And in greet reuerence / and charitee	221
Hir olde poure fader / fostred shee	
A fewe sheepe / spynnyng on feeld she kepte	
She wolde noght been ydel til she slepte	224
And whan she homward cam / she wolde bryng	225
Wortes / or othere herbes / tymes ofte	
The whiche she shredde / and seeth for hir lyuyng	
And made hir bed / ful harde and no thyng softe	228
And ay she kepte / hir fadres lyf on lofte	
With euerich obeisaunce and diligence	
That child may doon / to fadres reuerence	231
¶ Vp on Grisilde / this poure creature	232
fful ofte sithe / this Markys caste his eye	
As he / on huntyng rood parauenture	
And whan þat it fil / þat he myghte hire espye	235
He noght / with wantowne lookyng of folye	
Hise eyen caste on hire / but in sad wyse	
Vp on hir chiere / he gan hym ofte auyse	238
Commendynge in his herte / hir wommanhede	[leaf 94, back]
And eek hir vertu / passynge any wight	
Of so yong age / as wel in chiere as dede	
ffor thogh the peple / hadde no greet insight	242

In vertu / he considered ful right/ Hir bountee / and disposed that he wolde Wedde hire oonly / if euere he wedde sholde	245
¶ The day of weddyng cam / but no wight kan Telle / what womman / that it sholde be ffor which merueille / wondred many a man And seyden / whan that they were in priuete Wol nat oure lord / yet leue his vanytee ? Wol he nat wedde / allas allas the while ? Why wole he thus / hym self and vs bigile ?	246 249 252
¶ But natheles / this Markys hath doon make Of gemmes / set in gold and inASURE Brooches and rynges / for Grisildis sake And of hir clothyng' took he the mesure By a mayde / lyk' to hire stature And eek' of othere aornementes alle That vn-to swich a weddyng' sholde falle	253 256 259
The time of vndren / of the same day Approcheth / that this weddyng' sholde be And al the paleys / put was in array Bothe halle and chambres / ech in his degree Houses of office / stuffed with plentee Ther maystow seen / of deyntheuous vitaille That may be founde / as fer as last ytaille	260 263 266
This roial Markys / richely arrayed Lordes and ladyes / in his compaignye The whiche / that to the feeste weren yprayed And of his retenue / the bachelrye With many a soun / of sondry melodye Vn-to the village / of the which I tolde In this array / the righte wey han holde	267 270 273

¶ Grisilde of this / god woot ful Innocent	274
That for hire / shapen was al this array	
To fecchen water at a wellle is went	
And comth hoom / as soone as euer she may	277
ffor wel she hadde herd seyde / that thilke day	
The Markys sholde wedde / and if she myghte	
She wolde fayn / han seyn / som of that sighte	280
She thoghte / I wole / with othere maydens stonde	[leaf 95]
That been my felawes / in oure dore and se	[Latin note, p. 402]
The Markysesse / and therefore wol I fonde	
To doon at hoom / as soone as it may be	284
The labour / which that longeth vn-to me	
And thanne I may / at leyser hire biholde	
If she this wey / vn-to the Castel holde	287
And as she wolde / ouer hir thresshold gon	288
The Markys cam / and gan hire for to calle	
And she set down / hir water pot anon	
Biside the thresshold / in an Oxes stalle	291
And down vp-on hir knes she gan to falle	
And with sad contenance / kneleth stille	
Til she had herd / what was the lordes will	294
¶ This thoghtful Markys / spak vn-to this mayde	295
fful sobrelly / and seyde in this manere	[Latin note, p. 402]
Where is youre fader / o Grisildis he sayde	
And she with reuerence / in humble cheere	298
Answerde. lord / he is al redy heere	
And In she gooth / with outen lenger lette	
And to the Markys / she hir fader fette	301
He by the hand / thanne took this olde man	302
And seyde thus / whan he hym hadde asyde	
Ianicula / I neither may ne kan	
Lenger / the plesance of myn herte hyde	305

If that thou vouche sauf^t what so bityde
 Thy doghter wol I take / er þat I wende
 As for my wyf^t vn-to hir lyues ende 308

Thou louest me / I woot it wel certeyn 309

And art my feithful / lige man ybore
 And all that/ liketh me / I dar wel seyn
 It liketh thee / and specially therefore 312

Tel me that poynt / that I haue seyð bfore
 If that thou wol^t vn-to that purpos drawe
 To take me / as for thy sone in lawe 315

¶ This sodeyn cas / this man astonyed so 316

That reed he wax abayst^t and al quakyng^t
 He stood / vnnethes seyde he wordes mo
 But oonly thus / lord quod he / my willynge^s 319

Is as ye wole / ne ayeyns / youre likyng^e s
 I wol no thyng^t ye be my lord so deere
 Right as yow lust^t gouerneth this mateere 322

¶ Yet wol I / quod this Markys softly [leaf 95, back]

That in thy chambre / I. and thou / and she
 Haue a collacioñ / and wostow why ?
 ffor I wol axe / if it hire wille be 326

To be my wyf / and reule hire after me
 And al this shal be doon / in thy presence
 I wol noght^t speke / out of thyn Audience 329

¶ And in the chambre / whil they were aboute 330

Hir tretys / which as ye shal after heere
 The peple cam / vn-to the hous with oute
 And wondred hem / in how honeste manere 333

And tentify / she kepte hir fader deere
 But outrely / Grisildis wondre mygh^te
 ffor neuere erst^t ne saugh^t she swich a sighte 336

- No wonder is / thogh she were astoned [*Latin note*, p. 402] 337
 To seen so greet a gest' come in that place
 She neuere was / to swiche gestes woned
 ffor which / she looked / *with* ful pale face 340
 But shortly / forth this tale for to chace
 Thise arn the wordes / þat the Markys sayde
 To this benigne / verray feithful mayde 343
- ¶ Grisilde he seyde / ye shal wel vnderstonde 344
 It liketh to youre fader and to me [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 That I yow / wedde / and eek it may so stonde
 As I suppose / ye wol that it so be 347
 But thise demandes / axe I first quod he
 That sith it shal be doon / in hastif wyse
 Wol ye assente / or elles yow auyse 350
- I seye this / be ye redy with good herte 351
 To al my lust' and that I frely may
 As me best thynketh / do yow laughe or smerte
 And neuere ye to grucche it' nyght ne day 354
 And eek' whan I sey ye / ne sey nat nay
 Neither by word / ne frownyng' contenance
 Swere this / and heere I swere yow alliance 357
- ¶ Wondrynge vp on this word / quakyng for drede 358
 She seyde lord / vndigne and vnworthy^s [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 Am I / to thilke honour / þat ye me beede
 But as ye wole youre self' right so wol .I. 361
 And heere I swere / that neuere willyngly
 In werk ne thoght' I nyl yow disobeye [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 ffor to be deed / though me were looth to deye 364
- ¶ This is ynogh / Grisilde myn quod he [leaf 96] 365
 And forth he gooth / with a ful sobre cheere
 Out at the dore / and after that cam she
 And to the peple / he seyde in this manere 368

- This is my wyf quod he / þat standeth heere
 Honoureth hire / and loueth hire I preye
 Who so me loueth / ther is namoore to seye 371
- And for that no thyng^t of hir olde geere [*Latin note*, p. 402] 372
 She sholde brynge in to his hous / he bad^s
 That wommen / sholde dispoillen hire right there
 Of which thise ladyes / were nat right glad 375
 To handle hir clothes / wher Inne she was clad
 But nathelees / this mayde bright of hewe
 ffro foot to heed / they clothed han al newe 378
- Hir heris han they kembd / that lay vntressed 379
 fful rudely / and with hir fyngres smale
 A corone on hire heed / they han ydressed
 And sette hire / ful of Nowches grete and smale 382
 Of hire array / what sholde I make a tale
 Vnnethe the peple hire knew / for hire fairnesse
 Whan she translated was in swich richesse 385
- ¶ This Markys / hath hire spoused *with* a ryng^t 386
 Broght for the same cause / and thanne hire sette
 Vp on an hors snow whit^t and wel amblyng^t
 And to his paleys / er he lenger lette 389
 With ioyful peple þat hire ladde and mette
 Conuoyed hire / and thus the day they spende
 In reuel / til the sonne gan descende 392
- And shortly / forth this tale for to chace 393
 I seye / that to this newe Markysesse
 God hath swich fauour / sent hire of his grace
 That it ne semed nat^t by liklynesse 396
 That she was / born and fed in rudenesse
 As in a cote / or in an Oxe Stalle
 But norissed / in an Emperoures halle 399

- ¶ To euery wight / she woxen is so deere [*Latin note*, p. 402] 400
 And worshipful / þat folk ther she was bore
 And from hire birthe / knewe hire yeer by yeere
 Vnnethe trowed they / but dorste han swore 403
 That she to Ianicle / of which I spak bifore
 She doghter were / for as by coniecture
 Hem thoughte / she was another creature 406
- ffor though that euere vertuous was she [*leaf 96, back*] 407
 She was encessed / in swich excellence
 Of thewes goode / yset' in heigh bountee
 And so discreet' and fair of eloquence 410
 So benigne / and so digne of reuerence
 And koude so / the peples herte embrace
 That ech hire louede / that looked on hir face 413
- ¶ Noght oonly of Saluces in the toun 414
 Publiced was / the beautee of hir name
 But eek biside / in many a regioun
 If oon seide wel / another seyde the same 417
 So spradde / of hire heigh bountee the name
 That men and wommen / as wel yonge as olde
 Goon to Saluce / vpon hire to bihold 420
- Thus Walter lowely^s nay / but roially [*Latin note*, p. 402] 421
 Wedded / with fortunat honestetee
 In goddes pees / lyueth ful esily
 At hoom / and outward / grace ynogh had he 424
 And for he saugh / that vnder heigh degree [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 Was vertu hid / the peple hym heelde
 A prudent man / and that is seyn ful seelde 427
- ¶ Nat oonly this Grisildis / thurgh hir wit' [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 Koude al the feet' of wyfly humblenesse
 But eek' whan that the cas required it'
 The commune profit' koude she redresse 431

Ther nas discord / rancour / ne heuynesse	
In al that land / that she ne koude apese	
And wisely / brynge hem alle in reste <i>and</i> ese	434
Though that hire housbonde absent were/ anon ^s	435
If gentil men / or othere of hire contree	[<i>Latin note</i> , p. 402]
Were wrothe / she wolde bryngen hem aton	
So wise / and rype wordes hadde she	438
And Iuggementz of so greet equitee	
That she from heuene / sent was as men wende	
Peple to saue / and euery wrong tamende	441
¶ Nat longe tyme / after/ that this Grisild	442
Was wedded / she a doghter hath ybore	
Al had hire leuere / haue born a man child	
Glad was this Markys / and the folk ^t therfore	445
ffor though a mayde child / coome al bifore	
She may / vn-to a man child atteyne	
By liklihed / syn she nys nat bareyne	448
¶ Explicit ^t secunda pars 𐀀	
¶ Incipit ^t tercia pars 𐀀	[leaf 97]
T Her fil / as it bifalleth tymes mo ^s [<i>Latin note</i> , p. 402]	449
Whan þat this child / had souked but a throwe	
This Markys / in his herte longeth so	
To tempte his wyf ^t hir sadnesse for to knowe	452
That he ne myghte / out of his herte throwe	
This merueillous desir/ his wyf tassaye	
Nedelees god woot/ he thoghte / hire for taffraye	455
He hadde assayed hire / ynogh ^t bifore	456
And foond hire euere good / what nede ^t it	
Hire for to tempte / and alwey / moore and moore	
Though som men preise it ^t for a subtil wit/	459
But as for me / I seye that yuele it sit	
To assaye a wyf ^t whan þat it is no nede	
And putten hire / in angwyssh and in drede	462

ffor which / this Markys / wroghte in this manere	463
He cam allone / a nyght / ther as she lay	
With stierne face / and <i>with</i> ful trouble cheere	
And seyde thus / Grisilde quod he that day	466
That I yow took/ out of youre pouere array	
And putte yow / in estaat of heigh noblesse	
Ye haue / nat that' forgeten as I gesse	469
I seye Grisilde / this present dignitee	470
In which that I haue put yow /. as I trowe ^s	
Maketh yow nat' foryetful for to be	
That I yow took/ in poure estaat ful lowe	473
ffor any wele / ye moot youre seluen knowe	
Taak heede / of euery word / that y yow seye	
Ther is no wight' that hereth it but we tweye	476
Ye woot youre self wel / how þat ye cam heere	477
In to this hous / it is nat longe ago	
And though to me / þat ye be lief and deere	
Vn-to my gentils / ye be no thyng so	480
They seyn / to hem / it is greet shame and wo	
ffor to be subgetz / and to been in seruage	
To thee / that born art/ of a smal village	483
And namely / sith thy doghter was ybore	484
Thise wordes / han they spoken doutelees	
But I desire / as I haue doon bifore	
To lyue my lyf <i>with</i> hem / in reste and pees	487
I may nat in this caas / be recchelees	
I moot doon <i>with</i> thy doghter/ for the beste	
Nat as I wolde / but as my peple leste	490
And yet god woot' this is ful looth to me	[leaf 97, back]
But nathelees / with oute youre wityng'	
I wol nat doon / but this wol I quod he	
That ye to me assente / as in this thyng'	494

Shewe now youre pacience / in youre werkyng'
 That ye me highte / and swore in youre village
 That day / that makend was oure mariage 497

¶ Whan she had herd al this / she nocht ameued 498
 Neither in word / or chiere or countenaunce ¶ *Nec verbo / nec*
 ffor as it semed / she was nat agreued *vultu & cetera*

She seyde lord / al lyth in youre plesaunce 501
 My child and I / with hertely obeisaunce
 Been youres al / and ye mowe saue *and* spille
 Your owene thyng' werketh after youre wille 504

Ther may no thyng / god so my soule saue 505
 Liken to yow / that may displese me
 Ne I ne desire / no thyng' for to haue
 Ne drede for to leese / saue oonly thee /. *vel yee* 508
 This wyl is in myn herte / and ay shal be
 No lengthe of tyme / or deeth may this deface
 Ne chaunge my corage / to another place 511

¶ Glad was this Markys / of hire answeyng' 512
 But yet he feyned / as he were nat so
 Al drery was his cheere / and his lookyng'
 Whan *pat* he sholde / out/ of the chambre go 515
 Soone after this / a furlong wey or two
 He *pruvely* / hath toold al his entente
 Vn-to a man / and to his wyf hym sente 518

A maner sergeant' was this *prucee* man 519
 The which *pat* feithful ofte / he founden hadde
 In thynges grete / and eek swich folk wel kan
 Doon execucioñ on thynges badde 522
 The lord knew wel / that he hym loued *and* dradde
 And whan this *sergeant'* wiste the lordes wille
 In to the chambre / he stalked hym ful stille 525

- ¶ Madame he seyde / ye moote foryeue it me 526
 Though I do thyng^t to which I am constreyned
 Ye been so wys / that ful wel knowe ye
 That lordes heestes / mowe nat been yfeyned 529
 They mowe wel been / biwailed and compleyned
 But men moote nede / vn-to hire lust obeye
 And so wol I / ther is namoore to seye 532
- This child / I am comanded for to take [leaf 98] 533
 And spak namoore / but out the child he hente
 Despitously / and gan a cheere make
 As though he wolde / han slayn it er he wente 536
 Grisildis / moot al suffren and consente
 And as a lamb / she sitteth meke and stille
 And lect^t this cruel *sergeant* doon his wille 539
- ¶ Suspicious / was the diffame of this man ¶ *suspecta viri fama*
 Suspect^t his face / suspect^t his word also ¶ *suspecta facie*
 Suspect^t the tyme / in which he this bigan ¶ *suspecta hora*
 ¶ *suspecta erat oratio*
 Allas hir doghter / that she loued so 543
 She wende / he wolde han slawen it right tho
 But nathelees / she neither weepe ne syked
 Consentynge hire / to that the Markys lyked 546
- But atte laste / to speken she bigan 547
 And mekely / she to the sergeant preyde
 So as he was / a worthy gentil man
 That she moste kisse hire child / er pat it deyde 550
 And in hir barm / this litel child she leyde
 With ful sad face / and gan the child to kisse
 And lulled it^t and after gan it blisse 553
- And thus she seyde / in hire benigne voys 554
 ffare weel my child / I shal thee neuere see
 But sith / I thee / haue marked *with* the croys
 Of thilke fader / blessed moote he be 557

- That for vs deyde / vp on a croys of tree
 Thy soule litel child / I hym bitake
 ffor this nyght^t shaltow dyen for my sake 560
- ¶ I trowe / that to a norice in this cas 561
 It had been hard / this reuthe for to se
 Wel myghte a mooder / thanne han cryd allas
 But nathelees / so sad and stidefast was she 564
 That she endured / al aduersitee
 And to the *sergeant*^t mekely she sayde
 Hauē heer agayn / youre litel yonge mayde 567
- Gooth now quod she / and dooth my lordes heeste 568
 And o thyng/ wol I prey yow of youre grace
 That but my lord / forbad yow atte leeste
 Burieth this litel body / in som place 571
 That beestes ne no briddes / it to-race
 But he no word / wol to that *purpos* seye
 But took the child / and wente vpon his weye 574
- ¶ This *sergeant*^t cam vn-to his lord ageyn [leaf 98, back]
 And of Grisildis wordes / and hire cheere
 He tolde hym point^t for point^t in short and pleyne
 And hym presenteth / with his doghter deere 578
 Somwhat this lord / hath routhe in his manere
 But nathelees / his *purpos* heeld he stille
 As lordes doon / whan they wol han hir wille 581
- And bad his *sergeant*^t that he pryuely 582
 Sholde this child / softe wynde and wrappe
 With alle circumstances / tendrely
 And carie it in a cofre / or in a lappe 585
 But vp-on peyne / his heed of for to swappe
 That no man sholde knowe / of his entente
 Ne whenne / ne whider that he wente 588

But at Boloigne / to his suster deere 589
 That thilke tyme / of Pavik was Countesse
 He sholde it take / and shewe hire this mateere
 Bisekyng hire / to doon hire bisynesse 592
 This child to fostre / in alle gentillesse
 And whos child that it was / he bad hym hyde
 ffrom euery wight/ for oght þat may bityde 595

¶ The sergeant gooth / and hath fulfild this thyng^t 596
 But to this Markys / now retourne we
 ffor now gooth he / ful faste ymaginyng^t
 If by his wyues cheere / he myghte se 599
 Or by hire word aperceyue / that she^s
 Were changed / but he neuere hire koudé fynde
 But euere in oon / ylike sad and kynde 602

As glad / as humble / as bisy in seruyse [*Latin note, p. 402*] 603
 And cek^t in loue / as she was wont to be
 Was she to hym / in euery maner wyse
 Ne of hir doghter/ noght a word spak she 606
 Noon accident^t for noon aduersitee
 Was seyn in hire / ne neuere hir doghter name
 Ne nempned she / in ernest / nor in game 609

¶ Explicit tercia pars 𐀀

Sequitur pars quarta 𐀀

[leaf 99]

IN this estaat/ ther passed been foure yeer [*Latin note, p. 402*]
 Er she with childe was / but as god wolde
 A man child she bar / by this Walter
 fful gracious / and fair for to biholde 613
 And whan that folk^t it to his fader tolde
 Nat onoly he / but al his contree merye
 Was for this child / and god they thanke and herye 616
 Whan it was two yeer old^t / and fro the brest^t 617
 Departed of his norice / on a day
 This Markys / caughte yet another lest^t

- To tempte his wyf / yet ofter if he may 620
 O nedeles / was she tempted in assay
 But wedded men / ne knowe no mesure
 Whan þat they fynde / a pacient creature 623
- ¶ Wyf quod this Markys / ye han herd er this [Latin note,
p. 402]
 My peple / sikly berth oure mariage
 And namely / sith my sone yborn is
 Now is it worse / than euere in al oure age 627
 The murmure sleeth myn herte and my corage
 ffor to myne eres / comth the voys so smerte
 That it wel ny / destroyed hath myn herte 630
- ¶ Now sey they thus / whan Walter is agon 631
 Thanne shal / the blood of Ianicle succede
 And been oure lord / for oother haue we noon
 Swiche wordes / seith my peple out of drede 634
 Wel oughte I / of swich murmur taken heede
 ffor certainly / I drede swich sentence
 Though they nat pleyn / speke in myn Audience 637
- I wolde lyue in pees / if that I myghite 638
 Wherefore / I am disposed outrely
 As I his suster / serued by nyghite
 Right so thanke I / to serue hym pryuely 641
 This warne I yow / þat ye nat sodeynly
 Out of youre self^t for no wo sholde outreye
 Beth pacient^t and ther of I yow preye 644
- ¶ I haue quod she seyð thus / and euere shal 645
 I wol no thyng^t ne nyl no thyng certayn
 But as yow list^t naught greueth me at al
 Though þat my daughter / and my sone be slayn 648
 At youre comandement^t this is to sayn
 I haue nought had no part^t of children tweyne
 But first siknesse / and after wo and peyne 651

- Ye been oure lord / dooth with youre owene thyng^t [1109, bk]
 Right as yow list axeth no reed at me
 ffor as I lefte at hoom / al my clothyng^t
 Whan I first cam to yow^s right so quod she 655
 Lefte I my wyl / and al my libertee
 And took youre clothyng^t wherfore I yow preye
 Dooth youre plesaunce / I wol youre lust obeye 658
- And certes / if I hadde prescience 659
 Yourre wyl to knowe / er ye youre lust me tolde
 I wolde it doon / with outen negligence
 But now I woot youre lust^t and what ye wolde 662
 Al youre plesance / ferme and stable I holde
 ffor wiste I / that my deeth / wolde do yow ese [Latin note,
 p. 102]
 Right gladly / wolde I dyen yow to plese 665
- Deth may noght^t make no comparisoun 666
 Vn-to youre loue / and whan this Markys say
 The constance of his wyf / he caste adoun
 Hise eyen two / and wondreth þat she may 669
 In pacience / suffre al this array
 And forth he goth / with drery contenance
 But to his herte / it was ful greet plesance 672
- ¶ This vgly sergeant/ in the same wyse 673
 That he hire doghter caughte / right so he
 Or worse / if men worse kan deuyse
 Hath hent hire sone / þat ful was of beautee 676
 And euere in oon / so pacient was she
 That she no chiere maade / of heuynesse
 But kiste hir sone / and after gan it blesse 679
- Saue this / she preyde hym / that if he myghte 680
 Hir litel sone / he wolde in erthe graue
 His tendre lymes / delicaat to sighte
 ffro foweles and fro beestes for to saue 683

But she noon answerē / of hym myghte haue
 He wente his wey / as hym no thyng ne roghte
 But to Boloigne / he tendrely it broghte 686

This Markys / wondred euere lenger the moore 687
 Vp on hir pacience / and if that he
 Ne hadde soothly / knowen ther bifoore
 That partlyly / hir children loued she 690
 He wolde haue wend / þat of som subtiltee
 And of malice / or for cruceel corage
 That she hadde suffred this with sad visage 693

But wel he knew / that next hym self certayn [leaf 100]
 She loued hir children best in euery wyse
 But now of wommen / wolde I axen fayn
 If this assayes / myghte nat suffise 697
 What koude a sturdy housbonde moore deuyse
 To preeue hire wyfhod / or hir stedefastnesse
 And he continuyngē euere in sturdinesse 700

But ther been folk / of swich condicion 701
 That whan they haue / a certein purpos take
 They kan nat stynte of hire entencion
 But right as they were bounden to that stake 704
 They wol nat of that firste purpos slake
 Right so this Markys / fulliche hath purposed
 To tempte his wyf / as he was first disposed 707

He waiteth / if by word / or contenance 708
 That she to hym / was changed of corage
 But neuere / koude he fynde variance
 She was ay oon / in herte and in visage 711
 And ay the forther / þat she was in age
 The moore trewe / if þat it were possible
 She was to hym in loue / and moore penyble 714

ffor which it semed thus / þat of hem two	715
Ther nas but o wyl / for as walter leste	
The same lust' was hire plesance also	
And god be thanked / al fil for the beste	718
She shewed wel / for no worldly vnreste	
A wyf' as of hir self' no thing' ne sholde	
Wille in effect' but as hir housbonde wolde	721
¶ The sclandre of Walter / ofte and wyde spradde	722
That of a cruuel herte / he wikkedly	[Latin note, p. 402]
ffor he a poure womman wedded hadde.	
Hath mordred / bothe his children priuely	725
Swich murmure / was among hem comunly	
No wonder is / for to the peples ere	
Ther cam no word / but þat they mordred were	728
ffor which / where as his peple ther bifore	729
Hadde loued hym wel / the sclandre of his diffame	
Made hem / that they hym hated therfore	
To been a mordrere is an hateful name	732
But nathelees / for ernest' ne for game	
He of his cruuel purpos nolde stente	
To tempte his wyf/ was set al his entente	735
¶ Whan that his doghter .xij. yeer was of age	[leaf 100, back]
He to the court of Rome in subtil wyse	
Enformed of his wyl / sente his message	
Comaundyng hem / swiche bulles to deuyse	739
As to his cruuel purpos may suffyse	
How þat the pope / as for his peples reste	
Bad hym to wedde / another if hym leste	742
I seye / he bad they sholde countrefete	743
The popes bulles / makyng mencion	
That he hath leue / his firste wyf to letē	
As by the popes dispensacion	746

To stynte rancour and dissencion Bitwixe his peple and hym / thus seyde the bulle The which / they han publiced atte fulle	749
¶ The rude peple / as it no wonder is Wenden ful wel / that it hadde be right so But whan this tidynges cam to Grisildis I deeme / that hire herte was ful wo	750 753
But she / ylike sad for eueremo Disposed was / this humble creature The aduersitee of ffortune al tendure	756
Abidyng euer / his lust and his plesance To whom þat she was yeuen / herte and al As to hire verray worldly suffisance But shortly / if this storie I tellen shal	757 760
This Markys / writen hath in special A lettre / in which he sheweth his entente And secreely he to Boloigne it sente	763
To the Erl of Pavyk/ which þat hadde tho Wedded his suster/ preyde he specially To bryngen hoom agayn hise children two In honourable estaat' al openly	764 767
But o thyng' he hym preyde outrely That he to no wight' though men wolde enquere Sholde nat telle / whos children þat they were	770
But seye / the mayden / sholde ywedded be Vn-to the Markys / of Saluce anon And as this Erl was preyd / so dide he ffor at day set' he on his wey is goon	771 774
Toward Saluce / and lordes many oon In riche array this mayden for to gyde Hir yonge brother/ ridyng hire bisyde	777

- ¶ Arrayed was toward hir mariage [leaf 101]
 This fresshe mayde / ful of gemmes cleere
 Hir brother / which þat .vij. yeer was of age
 Arrayed eek / ful fressh in his manere 781
 And thus in gret noblesse / and with glad cheere
 Toward Saluces / shapyng e hir iourney
 fro day to day / they ryden in hir wey 784
- ¶ Explicit quarta pars 𐀀
- ¶ Sequitur pars quinta 𐀀
- A**mong al this / after his wikke vsage 785
 This Markys yet his wyf to tempte moore
 To the outtreste preeue / of hir corage
 fully / to han experience and loore 788
 If that she were / as stidefast as bifoore
 He on a day / in open audience
 ful boistously hap seyde hire this sentence 791
- ¶ Certes Grisilde / I hadde ynogh plesance 792
 To han yow to my wyf / for youre goodnesse
 As for youre trouthe / and for youre obeisance
 Nought for youre lynage / ne for youre richesse 795
 But now knowe I / in verray soothfastnesse
 That in gret lordshipe / if I wel auyse
 Ther is gret seruitute / in sondry wyse 798
- I may nat-doon / as euery Plowman may 799
 My peple / me constreyneth for to take
 Another wyf / and crien day by day
 And eek the pope / rancour for to slake 802
 Consenteth it that dar I vndertake
 And trelliche / thus muche I wol yow seye
 My newe wyf is comynge by the weye 805
- Be strong of herte / and voyde anon hir place 806
 And thilke dowere / that ye broghten me
 Taak it agayn / I graunte it of my grace

Retourneth / to youre fadres hous quod he	809
No man / may alwey han prosperitee	
With euene herte / I rede yow tendure	
This strook ^t of ffortune / or of auenture	812
¶ And she answerde agayn in pacience ^t <small>[leaf 101, back]</small>	813
My lord quod she / I woot ^t and wiste alway	
How þat / bitwixen youre magnificence	
And my pouerte / no wight kan ne may	816
Maken comparison / it is no nay	
I no heeld me neuere digne in no manere	
To be youre wyf / no ȝ ne youre Chambrere	819
And in this hous / ther ye me lady maade	820
The heighe god / take I for my wisse	
And also wysly / he my soule glaade	
I neuere / heeld me lady / ne maistresse	823
But humble seruant ^t to youre worthynesse	
And euere shal / whil þat my lyf may dure	
Abouen / euery worldly creature	826
That ye so longe / of youre benignitee	827
Han holden me / in honour and nobleye	
Where as I was / noghit worthy bee	
That thonke I god / and yow / to whom I preye	830
fforyelde it yow / ther is namoore to seye	
Vn-to my fader/ gladly wol I wende	
And with hym dwelle / vn-to my lyues ende	833
Ther I was fostred / of a child ful smal	834
Til I be deed / my lyf ther wol I lede	
A wydwe elene / in body / herte and al	
ffor sith I yaf/ to yow my maydenhede	837
And am youre trewe wyf/ it is no drede	
God shilde / swich a lordes wyf to take	
Another man / to housbonde / or to make	840

And of youre newe wyf / god of his grace	841
So graunte yow wele and prosperitee	
ffor I wol gladly / yelden hire my place	
In which that I was blisful wont to bee	844
ffor sith it liketh yow / my lord quod shee	
That whilom weren / al myn hertes reste	
That I shal goon / I wol goon whan yow leste	847
But ther as ye me profre / swich dowaire	848
As I first broghite / it is wel in my mynde	
It were my wrecched clothes no thyng faire	
The whiche to me / were hard now for to fynde	851
O goode god / how gentil and how kynde	
Ye semed / by youre speche / and youre visage	
The day / that maked was oure mariage	854
But sooth is seyde / algate I fynde it trewe	[leaf 102] 855
ffor in effect' it preued is on me	
Loue is noght' old / as whan þat it is newe	
But certes lord / for noon aduersitee	858
To dyen in the cas / it shal nat bee	
That euere / in word or werk / I shal repente	
That I yow yaf myn herte in hool entente	861
My lord ye woot/ that in my fadres place	862
Ye dide me streepe / out of my poure weede	
And richely / me cladden of youre grace	
To yow broghte I noght elles / out of drede .	865
But feith and nakednesse / and maydenhede	
And heere agayn / my clothyng I restoore	
And eek / my weddyng ryng/ for euere more	868
The remenant of youre Iueles redy be	869
In with youre chambre / dar I saufly sayn	
Naked / out of my fadres hous quod she	
I cam / and naked moot I turne agayn	872

Al youre plesance / wol I folwen fayn
 But yet I hope / it be nat youre entente
 That I smoklees / out of youre paleys wente 875

Ye koude nat doon / so dishoneste a thyng/ 876
 That thilke wombe / in which youre children leye
 Sholde biforn the peple / in my walkyng/
 Be seyn al bare / wherfore I yow preye 879
 Lat me / nat lyk a worm / go by the weye
 Remembre yow / myn owene lord so deere
 I was youre wyf / though I vnworthy weere 882

Wherfore / in gerdon of my maydenhede 883
 Which þat I broghte / and noght agayn I bere
 As voucheth sauf / to yeue me / to my meede
 But swich a smok as I was wont to were 886
 That I ther-^{1. couere}with may wrye the wombe of here
 That was youre wyf / and heer take I my leeu
 Of yow myn owene lord / lest I yow greue 889

¶ The smok quod he / that thou hast on thy bak 890
 Lat it be stille / and bere it forth with thee
 But wel vnnethes / thilke word he spak'
 But wente his wey / for routhe and for pitce 893
 Biforn the folk/ hir seluen strepeth she
 And in hir smok/ with heed / and foot / al bare
 Toward hir fader hous / forth is she fare 896

¶ The folk hire folwe / wepyng in hir weye [leaf 102, back]
 And ffortune ay they cursen / as they goon
 But she fro wepyng^t kepte hire eyen dreye
 Ne in this tyme / word ne spak she noon 900
 Hir fader / that this tidynge herde anon
 Curseth the day / and tyme that nature
 Shoope hym / to been a lyues creature 903

ffor out of doute / this olde poure man	904
Was euere / in suspect ^t of hir mariage	
ffor euere he demed / sith that it bigan	
That whan the lord / fulfild hadde his corage	907
Hym wolde thynke / it were a disparage	
To his estaat / so lowe for talighte	
And voyden hire / as soone as euer he myghte	910
Agayns his doghter / hastiliche goth he	911
ffor ho by noyse of folk / knew hire comynge	
And with hire olde coote / as it myghte be	
He couered hire / ful sorwefully wepynge	914
But on hire body / myghte he it nat brynge	
ffor rude was the clooth / and she moore of age	
By dayes fele / than at hire mariage	917
¶ Thus with hire fader / for a certeyn space	918
Dwelleth this flour/ of wyfly pacience	
That neither/ by hire wordes / ne hire face	
Biforn the folk / ne eek in hire absence	921
Ne shewed she / that hire was doon offence	
Ne of hire heighe estaat. no remembraunce	
Ne hadde she / as by hire contenaunce	924
No wonder is / for in hire grete estaat	925
Hire goost was euere / in pleyn humylitee	
No tendre mouth / noon herte delicaat	
No pompe / no semblant of roialtee	928
But ful of pacient benyngnytee	
Discreet ^t and pridelees / ay honorable	
And to hire housbonde / euere meke and stable	931
¶ Men speke of Iob / and moost for his humblesse	932
As clerkes whan hem list ^t konne wel endite	
Namely of men / but as in soothfastnesse	
Though clerkes / preise wommen but a lite	935

Ther kan no man / in humblesse hym acquite
 As womman kan / ne been half so trewe
 As women been / but it be falle of newe 938

[PART VI.]

¶ ffo Boloigne / is this Erl of Pavyk^t come [leaf 103] 939
 Of which the fame vp sprang^t to moore and lesse
 And in the peples eres / alle and some
 Was kouth eek / that a newe Markysesse 942
 He with hym brog^hte / in swich pompe and richesse
 That neuere was ther seyn / with mannes eye
 So noble array / in al Westlumbardye 945

¶ The Markys / which that shoope and knew al this 946
 Er that this Erl was come / sente his message
 ffor thilke / sely poure Grisildis
 And she with humble herte / and glad visage 949
 Nat with no swollen thoght^t in hire corage
 Cam at his heste / and on hire knees hire sette
 And reuerently / and wisely she hym grette 952

¶ Grisilde quod he / my wyl is outrely 953
 This mayden / that shal wedded been to me
 Receiued be / to morwe as roially
 As it possible is / in myn hous to be 956
 And eek / that euery wight in his degree
 Hauē his estaat^t in sittyn^gt and seruyse
 And heigh plesaⁿce / as I kan best deuyse 959

¶ I haue no women / suffisaⁿt certayn 960
 The chambres / for tarraye in ordinaⁿce
 After my lust^t and therefore wolde I fayn
 That thyn were / al swich manere gouernaⁿce 963
 Thou knowest eek^t of old al my plesaⁿce
 Thogh thyn array be badde and yuel biseye
 Do thou thy deuoir / at the leeste weye 966

- ¶ Nat only lord / that .I. am glad quod she 967
 To doon youre lust' but .I. desire also
 Yow for to serue / and plesē in my degree
 With outen feyntynge' and shal eueremo 970
 Ne neuere / for no wele / ne no wo
 Ne shal the goost' *wit*hInne myn herte stente
 To loue yow best' *wit*h al my trewe entente 973
- And with that word / she gan the hous to dighte 974
 And tables for to sette / and beddes make
 And peyned hire / to doon al that she myghte
 Preyyngē the chambres / for goddes sake 977
 To hasten hem / and faste swepe and shake
 And she / the mooste seruysable of alle
 Hath euery chambre arrayed / and his halle 980
- ¶ Abouten vndren / gan this Erl alighte [leaf 103, back] 981
 That *wit*h him broghte / thise noble children tweye
 ffor which the peple / ran to seen the sighte
 Of hire array / so richely biseye 984
 And thanne at erst' amonges hem they seye
 That Walter was no fool / thogh̄ þat hym leste
 To change his wyf/ for it was for the beste 987
- ffor she is fairer / as they deemen alle 988
 Than is Grisilde / and moore tendre of age
 And fairer fruyt' bitwene hem sholde falle
 And moore pleasant. for hire heigh lynage 991
 Hir brother eek/ so faire was of visage
 That hem to seen / the peple hath caught plesaunce
 Commendynge now / the Markys gouernaunce 994
- O** Stormy peple / vnsad / and euere vntrewe ¶ Auctor
 Ay vndiscreet' and chaungynge as a vane
 Delitynge euere / in rumbul that is newe
 ffor lyk the moone / ay waxe ye and wane 998

Ay ful of clappyng ^t deere ynogh ^t a Iane Youre doom is fals / youre constance yuele preeueth A ful greet fool / is he / þat on yow leeueth	1001
Thus seyden sadde folk/ in that Citee Whan that the peple / gazed vp and down ffor they were glad / right for the noueltece To han / a newe lady of hir toun Namoore of this / make I now menciou But to Grisilde agayn / wol I me dresse And telle / hir constance / and hir bisynesse	1002 1003
¶ fful bisy was Grisilde / in euery thyng That to the feeste / was apertinent ^t Right noght ^t was she abayst ^t of hire clothyng ^t Thogh it were rude / and somdeel eek to-rent ^t But <i>wit</i> glad cheere / to the yate is she went ^t With oother folk ^t to greeete the Markysesse And after that ^t dooth forth hire bisynesse	1009 1012 1015
With so glad chiere / hise gestes she receyueth And so konnyngly / euerich in his degree That no defaute / no man aperceyueth But ay they wondren / what she myghte bee That in so poure array was for to see And koude / swich honour and reuerence And worthily / they preisen hire prudence	1016 1019 1022
In al this meene while / she ne stente This mayde / and eek hir brother to commende With al hir herte / in ful benyngne entente So wel / þat no man koude hir pris amende But atte laste / whan þat these lordes wende To sitten down to mete / he gan to calle Grisilde / as she was bisy in his halle	[leaf 104] 1023 1026 1029

- ¶ Grisilde quod he / as it were in his pley 1030
 How liketh thee my wyf/ and hire beautee ?
 Right wel quod she my lord / for in good fey
 A fairer/ saugh I neuere noon than she 1033
 I prey to god / yeue hire prosperitee
 And so hope I / that he wol to yow sende
 Plesance ynogh / vn-to youre lyues ende 1036
- O thyng biseke I yow / and warne also [*Latin note, p. 402*] 1037
 That ye ne prikke / with no tormentynge
 This tendre mayden / as ye han doon mo
 ffor she is fostred / in hire norissyng 1040
 Moore tendrely / and to my supposynge
 She koude nat/ aduersitee endure
 As koude / a poure fostred creature 1043
- ¶ And whan this Walter / saugh hire pacience 1044
 Hir glad chiere / and no malice at al
 And he so ofte / had doon to hire [offence]
 And she ay sad / and constant as a wal 1047
 Continuyng euer / hire Innocence oueral
 This sturdy Markys / gan his herte dresse
 To rewen / vp on hire wyfly stedfastnesse 1050
- ¶ This is ynogh / Grisilde myn quod he 1051
 Be now namoore agast' ne yuele apayed
 I haue thy feith / and thy benyngnytee
 As wel / as euer womman was assayed 1054
 In greet estaat', and pourelliche arrayed
 Now knowe I goode wyf / thy stedfastnesse
 And hire in armes took / and gan hire kesse 1057
- ¶ And she for wonder/ took of it no keepe 1058
 She herde nat / what thyng' he to hire seyde
 She ferde / as she had stert out' of a sleepe
 Til she / out of hire mazednesse abreyde 1061

Grisilde quod he / by god that for vs deyde
 Thou art my wyf/ noon oother I haue
 Ne neuere hadde / as god my soule sauc 1064

¶ This is thy doghter / which thou hast supposed [cf 104, bk]
 To be my wyf / that oother feithfully
 Shal be myn heir / as I haue ay supposed
 Thou bare hym / in thy body trewely 1068
 At Boloigne / haue I kept hem priuely
 Taak hem agayn / for now maystow nat seye
 That thou hast lorn / noon of thy children tweye 1071

And folk / that ootherweys / han seyde of me 1072
 I warne hem wel / þat I haue doon this deede
 ffor no malice / ne for no crueltee
 But for tassaye / in thee thy wommanheede 1075
 And nat to sleen my children / god forbeede
 But for to kepe hem / pryuely and stille
 Til I thy purpos knewe / and al thy wille 1078

¶ Whan she this herde / aswowne doun she falleth 1079
 ffor pitous Ioye / and after hire swownyng
 She bothe hire yonge children / vn-to hire calleth
 And in hire Armes / pitously wepyng 1082
 Embraceth hem / and tendrely kissyng
 fful lyk a mooder/ with hire salte teeres
 She bathed / bothe hire visage and hire heeres 1085

¶ O which a pitous thyng^t it was to se 1086
 Hir swownyng^t. and hire humble voys to heere
 Grauntmercy lord / that thanke I yow quod she
 That ye han saued me my children deere 1089
 Now rekke I neuere / to been deed right heere
 Sith I stonde in youre loue / and in youre grace.
 No fors of deeth / ne whan my spirit pace 1092

- ¶ O tendre / o deere / o yonge children myne 1093
 Youre woful mooder / wende stedfastly
 That crueel houndes / or som foul vermyne
 Hadde eten yow / but god of his mercy 1096
 And youre benyngne fader / tendrely
 Hath doon yow kept and in that same stounde
 Al so deyntyly / she swapte adoun to grounde 1099
- And in hire swough / so sadly holdeth she 1100
 Hire children two / whan she gan hem tembrace
 That with greet sleighte / and greet difficultee
 The children / from hire arm they gonne arace 1103
 O many a teere / on many a pitous face
 Doun ran / of hem þat stoden hire bisyde
 Vnnethe abouten hire / myghete they abyde 1106
- ¶ Walter hire gladeth / and hire sorwe slaketh [leaf 105]
 She riseth vp abaysed / from hire trañce
 And euery wight / hire ioye and feeste maketh
 Til she / hath caught agayn hire contenañce 1110
 Walter hire dooth / so feithfully plesañce
 That it was deyntee / for to seen the cheere
 Bitwixe hem two / now they been met yfeere 1113
- ¶ These ladyes / whan that they hir tyme say 1114
 Han taken hire / and in to chambre gon
 And strepen hire / out of hire rude array
 And in a clooth of gold / þat brighte shoon 1117
 With a coroune / of many a richie stoon
 Vp on hire heed / they in to halle hire broghte
 And ther she was / honored as hire oghte 1120
- Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende 1121
 ffor euery man and womman dooth his myght
 This day / in murthe and reuel to dispende
 Til on the welkne / shoon the sterres lyght 1124

- ffor moore solempne / in euery mannes sygh^t
 This feste was / and gretter of costage
 Than was / the reuel / of hire mariage 1127
- ¶ fful many a yeer / in heigh prosperitee 1128
 Lyuen thise two / in concord and in reste
 And richely / his doghter maryed he
 Vn-to a lord / oon of the worthieste 1131
 Of al Ytaille / and thanne in pees and reste
 His wyues fader / in his court he kepeth
 Til that the soule / out of his body crepeth 1134
- His sone / succedeth in his heritage 1135
 In reste and pees / after his fader day
 And fortunat^t was eek / in mariage
 Al putte he nat his wyf / in greet assay 1138
 This world is nat so strong^t it is no nay
 As it hath been / of olde tymes yoore
 And herkneth / what this Auctour seith therfoore 1141
- ¶ This storie is seyde / nat for that wyues sholde [Latin note,
p. 402]
 ffolwen Grisilde / as in humylitee
 ffor it were inportable / though they wolde
 But for that euery wigh^t in his degree 1145
 Sholde be constant^t in aduersitee
 As was Grisilde / therfore petrak^t writeth
 This storie / which with heigh stile he enditeth 1148
- ffor sith a womman / was so pacient^t [leaf 105, back]
 Vn-to a mortal man / wel moore vs oghte
 Receyuen al in gree / that god vs sent^t
 ffor greet skile is / he preeue that he wrogh^t 1152
 But he / ne tempteth no man / that he boghte
 As seith seint Iame / if ye his pistel rede
 He preeueth folk al day / it is no drede 1155

And suffreth vs / as for oure excercise	1156
With sharpe scourges / of Aduersitee	
fful ofte / to be bete in sondry wise	
Nat for to know oure wyl / for <i>certes</i> he ^s	1159
Er we were born / knew oure freletee	
And for oure beste / is al his gouernañce	
Lat vs thanne lyue / in vertuous suffrañce	1162
¶ But o word lordynges / herkneth er I go	
It were ful hard / to fynde now a dayes	1163
In al a toun / Grisildis / thre or two	
ffor if þat they were put to swiche assayes	1166
The gold of hem / hath now so badde alayes	
With bras / þat thogh the coyne be fair at eye	
It wolde rather / breste atwo than plye	1169
ffor which heere / for the wyues loue of Bathe	
Whos lyf and al hire secte god mayntene	1170
In heigh maistrie / and elles were it scathe .	
I wol with lusty herte / fressh and grene	1173
Seyn yow a song to glade yow I wene	
And lat vs stynte / of earnestful matere	
Herkneth my song that seith in this manere	1176

¶ Lenuoy de Chaucer 𐞆

G risilde is deed / and eek hire pacience	
And bothe atones / buryed in Ytaille	
ffor which I crie / in open audience	1179
No wedded man / so hardy be tassaille	
His wyues pacience / in hope to fynde	
Grisildis / for in certein he shal faille	1182

- O noble wyues / ful / of heigh prudence
 Lat noon humylitee / youre tonge nail
 Ne lat no clerk/ haue cause or diligence 1185
 To write of yow / a storie of swich meruaille
 As of Grisildis / pacient and kynde
 Lest Chichiuache / yow swelwe in hire entraille 1188
- ffolweth Ekko / that holdeth no silence [leaf 106]
 But euere answereth / at the countretaille
 Beth nat bidaffed for youre Innocence 1191
 But sharply / taak on yow the gouernaille
 Emprmenteth wel this lessoñ in youre mynde
 ffor *commune profit'* sith it may auaille 1194
- Ye Archiwyues / stondeth at defense
 Syn ye be strong' as is a greet Camaille
 Ne suffreth nat/ *pat* men yow doon offense 1197
 And sklendre wyues / fieble as in bataille
 Beth egre / as is a Tygre yond in Ynde
 Ay clappeth as a Mille / I yow consaille 1200
- Ne dred hem nat' doth hem no reuerence
 ffor though thyn housbonde / armed be in maille
 The arwes / of thy crabbed eloquence 1203
 Shal *perce* his brest/ and eek' his Auentaille
 In Ialousie / I rede eek' thou hym bynde
 And thou shalt make hym couche as doth a quaille 1206
- If thou be fair/ ther folk been in *presence*
 Shewe thou thy visage / and thyn apparaille
 If thou be foul / be fre of thy dispence 1209
 To gete thee freendes / ay do thy *trauaille*
 Be ay of chiere / as light as leef on lynde
 And lat hym care *and* wepe / and wryng *and* waille 1212

SIDE-NOTES TO CLERK'S TALE, ELLESMERE MS.

(From Petrarch's Latin original: see the Society's *Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*.)

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 404, l. 40. ¶ Est ad ytalie latus occiduum Vesulus ex appenini lugis mons altissimus qui vertice nebula superans liquido sese ingerit etheri Mons suapte / nobilis natura padi ortu nobilissimus qui latere fonte lapsus exiguo Orientem contra solem fertur &cetera [MS, leaf 92.]

p. 405, l. 57. ¶ Inter cetera ad radicem Vesuli terra saluciarum vicis & Castellis. [MS, leaf 92.]

p. 409, l. 197. ¶ fuit haut procul a palacio &cetera. [MS, leaf 94.]

p. 412, l. 281. ¶ Vt expeditis curis alijs ad videndum domini sui sponsam cum puellis comitibus prepararet / [MS, leaf 95.]

p. 412, l. 295. ¶ quum Walterus cogitabundus cedens eamque compellans nomine. [MS, leaf 95.]

p. 414, l. 337. ¶ Et insolito tanti hospitis aduentu stupidam inuenit. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 344. ¶ Et patri tuo placet inquit & mihi vt vxor mea sis / et credo idipsum tibi placeat / sed habeo ex te querere &cetera. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 356. ¶ sine vlla frontis aut verbi inpugnacione. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 414, l. 358. ¶ Nil ego vnquam sciens nedum faciam set eciam cogitabo quod contra animum tuum sit / nec tu aliquid facies / et si me mori iusseris quod moleste feram &cetera. [MS, leaf 95, back.]

p. 415, l. 372. ¶ dehinc / ne quid reliquiarum fortune veteris nouam inferat in domum / nudari eam iusserit / [MS, leaf 96.]

p. 416, l. 400. ¶ Atque apud omnes supra fidem cara & venerabilis facta est / vix quod hijs ipsis qui illius originem nouerant persuaderi posset Ianicule natam esse tantus vite / tantus morum decor ea verborum grauitas atque dulcedo quibus omnium animos nexu sibi magni amoris astrinxerat / [MS, leaf 96.]

p. 416, l. 421. ¶ sic Walterus humili quidem / set / insigni no prospero matrimonio honestatis summa dei in pace &cetera. [MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 416, l. 425. ¶ *quodque eximiam virtutem tanta sub inopia latitantem tam perspicaciter deprendisset/ vulgo prudentissimus habebatur.* [MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 416, l. 428. ¶ *Neque vero solers sponsa muliebria tantum ac domestica / sed vbi res posceret publica eciam subibat officia.* [MS, leaf 96, back.]

p. 417, l. 435. ¶ *Viro absente / lites patrie / nobilium discordias dirimens atque componens tam grauibus responsis tanta que maturitate, & Iudicij equitate vt omnes ad salutem publicam demissa celo feminam predicarent/* [MS, leaf 97, back.]

p. 417, l. 449. ¶ *Ceperit vt fit interdum walterum cum iam ablactata esset infantula mirabilis quedam quam laudabilis cupiditas satis expertam care fidem coniugis experiendi alcius & iterum atque iterum retemptandi.* [MS, leaf 97.]

p. 422, l. 603. ¶ *par alacritas atque sedalitas solitum obs[e]-quium / idem amor nulla filie mencio.* [MS, leaf 98, back.]

p. 422, l. 610. ¶ *transiuerant hoc in statu anni iiii^r. dum ecce grauida &cetera.* [MS, leaf 99.]

p. 423, l. 624. ¶ *Et olim audisti populum meum egre nostrum ferre connubium &cetera.* [MS, leaf 99.]

p. 424, l. 664. ¶ *ffac sen[ten]ciam tibi placere quod moriar volens moriar.* [MS, leaf 99, back.]

p. 426, l. 722. ¶ *ceperit sensim de Waltero decolor fama creb[r]escere.* [MS, leaf 100.]

p. 436, l. 1037. ¶ *Vnum bona fide precor ac moneo ne hanc/ illis aculeis agites quibus alteram agitasti / namque & iunior & delicacius nutrita est/ pati quantum ego vt reor non valeret/* [MS, leaf 104.]

p. 439, l. 1142. ¶ *Hanc historiam stilo nunc alto retexere visum fuit/ non tum ideo vt matronas nostri temporis ad imitandam huius vxoris pacienciam / que inimitabilis videtur / quam vt legentes ad imitandam saltem femine constanciam excitarent/. Vt que hec viro suo prestitit/ hoc prestare d[e]o nostro audeat/ quilibet/ vt Iacobus ait apostolus / Intemptator sit/ malorum & ipso neminem temptat/ probat tamen & sepe nos multis ac grauibus flagellis exerceri sinit/ non vt animum nostrum sciatur/ quem sciuit/ antequam crearemur &cetera.* [MS, leaf 105.]

APPENDIX TO GROUP E, § 2.

[? *Original, but rejected, End-Link to the Clerk's Tale, perhaps following l. 1162, with which the paraphrase of Petrarch's Latin ends, or l. 1169.*]

¶ Bihoold the murye wordes of the Hoost' 𐀀

THis worthy clerk' whan ended was his tale
 Oure hoost seyde / and swoor by goddes bones
 Me were leure / than a barel ale
 My wyf at hoom / had herd this legende ones 4
 This is a gentil tale / for the nones
 As to my purpos / wiste ye my wille
 But thyng' þat wol nat be / lat it be stille 𐀀 7

¶ Heere endeth the tale / of the Clerk' of Oxenford'

¶ The prologe of the Marchantes tale  [leaf 106, back]

Wepynge and waylynge care and oother sorwe
 I knowe ynogh / on euen and a morwe
 Quod the Marchant and so doon othere mo
 That wedded been / I trowe that it be so 1216
 ffor wel I woot it fareth so with me
 I have a wyf / the worste that may be
 ffor thogh the feend / to hire ye coupled were
 She wolde hym ouermacehe / I dar wel swere : 1220
 What sholde I yow reheree in special
 Hir hye malice / she is a shrewe at al
 Ther is a long and large difference
 Bitwix Grisildis grete paciencie 1224
 And of my wyf / the passynge crueltee
 Were I vnbounden / al so moot I thee
 I wolde neuere eft comen in the snare
 We wedded men / lyue in sorwe and care 1228
 Assaye who so wole / and he shal fynde
 I seye sooth / by seint Thomas of ynde
 As for the moore part I sey nat alle
 God shilde / that it sholde so bifalle 1232
 ¶ A good sire hoost / I haue ywedded bee
 Thise Monthes two / and moore nat pardee
 And yet I trowe / he that al his lyue
 Wyflee hath been / though þat men wolde him ryue 1236
 Vn-to the herte / ne koude in no manere
 Tellen so muchel / sorwe / as I now heere ?
 Koude tellen / of my wyues cursednesse
 ¶ Now quod our hoost . Marchant so god yow blesse 1240
 Syn ye so muchel / knowen of that Art
 fful hertely / I pray yow telle vs part
 ¶ Gladly quod he / but of myn owene soore
 ffor soory herte / I telle may namoore 1244

¶ Heere bigynneth the Marchantes tale 𐀚

[Painting of the Merchant]

WHilom ther was dwellynge in Lumbardye
 A worthy knyght^t þat born was of Pavye
 In which he lyued / in greet prosperitee
 And sixty yeer / a wyfles man was hee
 And folwed ay his bodily delyt^t
 On wommen / ther as was his appetyt^t
 As doon these fooles / that been seculer [leaf 107]
 And whan that he / was passed sixty yeer 1252
 Were it^t for hoolynesse / or for dotage
 I kan nat seye / but swich a greet corage
 Hadde this knyght^t to been a wedded man
 That day and nyght^t / he dooth al that he kan 1256
 Tespien / where he myghte wedded be
 Preyngre oure lord / to granten him þat he^s
 Mighte ones knowe / of thilke blisful lyf
 That is bitwixe / an housbonde / and his wyf / 1260
 And for to lyue / vnder that hooly boond^t
 With which þat first^t god / man and womman bond^t
 Noon oother lyf seyde he / is worth a bene
 ffor wedlok / is so esy / and so clene 1264
 That in this world / it is a Paradys
 Thus seyde this olde knyght / þat was so wys
 ¶ And certeinly / as sooth / as god is kyng^t.
 To take a wyf^t it is a gloriou^s thyng^t 1268
 And namely / whan a man / is cold and hoor
 Thanne is a wyf^t the fruyt^t of his tresor
 Thanne sholde he take / a yong wyf^t and a feir
 On which / he myghte / engendren hym an heir 1272

And lede his lyf^t in ioye and in solas
 Where as thise bachelers / synge allas
 Whan that they fynden / any aduersitee
 In loue / which nys / but chilydyssh vanytee 1276
 And trewely / it sit wel to be so
 That bachelers / haue often peyne and wo
 On brotel ground^t they buylde / and brotelnesse
 They fynde / whan they wene sikernesse 1280
 They lyue / but as a bryd / or as a beest^t
 In libertee / and vnder noon arceest^t
 Ther as a wedded man / in his estaat^t
 Lyueth a lyf^t blisful and ordinaat^t 1284
 Vnder this yok^t of mariage ybounde
 Wel may his herte / in ioye and blisse habounde
 ffor who kan be / so buxom as a wyf^t
 Who is so trewe / and eek so ententyf^t 1288
 To kepe hym syk^t and hool / as is his make
 ffor wele or wo / she wole hym nat forsake
 She nys nat wery / hym to loue and serue
 Thoghⁿ þat he lye bedrede / til he sterue 1292
 And yet^t somme clerkes seyn / it nys nat so
 Of whiche / he Theofraste is oon of the
 What force / thoughⁿ Theofraste liste lye
 Ne take no wyf quod he / for housbondrye 1296
 As for to spare / in houshold^t thy dispence
 A trewe seruant^t dooth moore diligence
 Thy good to kepe / than thyn owene wyf^t [leaf 107, back]
 ffor she wol clayme / half part al hir lyf^t 1300
 And if thou be syk^t so god me saue
 Thy verray freendes / or a trewe knaue
 Wol kepe thee bet^t than she þat waiteth ay
 After thy good / and hath doon many a day 1304
 And if thou take a wyf / vn-to thyn hoold^t
 fful lightly / maystow been a Cokewold^t
 This sentence / and an hundred thynges worse
 Writeth this man / ther god his bones corse 1308

- But take no kepe / of al swicĥ vanytee'
 Deffie Theofraste / and herke me
- ¶ A wyf/ is goddes yifte verraily [Latin note, p. 477]
 Alle otherere manere yiftes hardily 1312
 As londes / rentes / pasture / or commune
 Or moebles / alle been yiftes of ffortune // dona fortune
 That passen / as a shadwe vpon a wal
 But dredelees / if pleynty speke I shal 1316
 A wyf wol laste / and in thyn hous endure
 Wel lenger than thee list/ paraurenture
- ¶ Mariage is / a ful greet sacrement'
 He / which þat hath no wyf / I holde hym shent' 1320
 He lyueth helplees / and al desolat'
 I speke of folk' in seculer estaat'
 And herke why / I sey nat this for noght
 That womman is / for mannes helpe ywroght' 1324
 The hye god / whan he hadde Adam maked
 And saugh him al allone / bely naked
 God of his grete goodnesse / seyde than [Latin note, p. 477]
 Lat vs now make an helpe vn-to this man 1328
 Lyk to hym self' and thanne he made him Eue
 Heere may ye se / and heer-by may ye preue
 That wyf is mannes helpe / and his confort'
 His Paradys terrestre / and his disport' 1332
 So buxom / and so vertuou is she
 They moste nedes / lyue in vnitee
 O flessĥ they been / and o flessĥ as I gesse
 Hath but oon herte / in wele and in distresse 1336
- ¶ A wyf /^s a Seinte marie benedicite
 How myghte a man / han any aduersitee
 That hath a wyf/ certes I kan nat seye
 The blisse / which þat is bitwixe hem tweye 1340
 Ther may no tonge telle / or herte thynke
 If he be poure / she helpeth hym to swynke
 She kepeth his good / and wasteth neuer a deel
 Al that hire housbonde lust' hire liketh weel 1344

- She seith not ones nay / whan he seith yo
 Do this seith he / al redy sire seith she
 O blisful ordre of wedlok *precious* [leaf 108]
 Thou art so murye / and eek so *vertuous* 1348
 And so commended / and appreued eek'
 That euery man / þat halt hym worth a leek' /
 Vp on his bare knees / oughte al his lyf /
 Thanken his god / þat hym hath sent a wyf / 1352
 Or elles preye to god / hym for to sende
 A wyf / to laste / vn to his lyues ende
 ffor thanne his lyf / is set in sikernesse
 He may nat' be deceyued as I gesse 1356
 So þat he werke / after his wyues reede
 [.

 1360
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 ¶ Lo how þat Iacob / as thise clerkes rede [Latin note, p. 477]
 By good conseil / of his mooder Rebekke
 Boond the kydes skyn / aboute his nekke 1364
 Thurgh which / his fadres benyson he wan
 ¶ Lo Iudith / as the storie eek telle kan [Latin note, p. 477]
 By wys conseil / she goddes peple kepte
 And slow hym Olofernus / whil he slepte 1368
 ¶ Lo Abigayl / by good conseil / how she [Latin note, p. 477]
 Saued hir housbonde Nabal / whan þat he s
 Sholde han be slayn / and looke Ester also [Latin note, p. 477]
 By good conseil / delyuered out of wo 1372
 The peple of god / and made hym Mardochee
 Of Assuere / enhaunced for to be
 ¶ Ther nys no thyng/ in gree *superlatyf'* [Latin note, p. 477]
 As seith Senek' aboue an humble wyf' 1376
 ¶ Suffre thy wyues tonge / as Catoñ bit [Latin note, p. 477]
 She shal comande / and thou shalt suffren it
 And yet' she wole obeye of curteisye
 A wyf' is kepere / of thyn housbondrye [Latin note, p. 477]

Wel may the sike man / biwaille *and* wepe
 Ther as ther nys no wyf / the hous to kepe
 I warne thee / if wisely / thou wolt wirche [Latin note, p. 477]
 Loue wel thy wyf^t as crist loued his chirche 1384
 If thou louest thy self^t thou louest thy wyf/ [Latin note, p. 477]
 No man hateth his flessĥ / but in his lyf^s
 He fostreth it^t and therfore bidde I thee
 Cherisse thy wyf / or thou shalt neuere thee 1388
 Housbonde and wyf^t what so men iape or pleye
 Of worldly folk / holden the siker weye
 They been so knyht^t ther may noon harm bityde
 And namely / vp on the wyues syde 1392
 ffor which this Ianuarie / of whom I tolde
 Considered hath / inwith hise dayes olde
 The lusty lyf / the vertuouus quyete
 That is in mariage, hony sweete 1396.
 And for hise freendes / on a day he sente
 To tellen hem theeffect^t of his entente
With face sad / his tale he hath hem toolde [leaf 108, bk]
 He seyde freendes / I am hoor and oold^t 1400
 And almost god woot^t on my pittes brynke
 Vp on the soule / somewhat moste I thynke
 I haue my body / folily depended
 Blessed be god / that it shal been amended 1404
 ffor I wol be / certeyn a wedded man
 And that anoon / in al the haste I kan
 Vn to som mayde / fair / and tendre of age
 I prey yow / shapeth for my mariage 1408
 Al sodeynly / for I wol nat abyde
 And I wol fonde / tespian on my syde
 To whom / I may be wedded hastily
 But for as muche / as ye been mo than I 1412
 Ye shullen rather / swich a thyng espyen
 Than I / and where me best were to allyen
 ¶ But o thyng^t warne I yow / my freendes deere
 I wol noon oold wyf han / in no manere 1416

She shal nat passe twenty yeer certayn
 Oold fissh and yong' flessĥ / wolde I haue fayn
 Bet is quod he / a pyk than a pykerel
 And bet than olde boef' is the tendre veel 1420
 I wol no womman / thritty yeer of age
 It is but benestraw / and greet forage
 And eek / these olde wydwes / god it woot
 They konne / so muchel craft on Wades boot 1424
 So muchel broken harm / whan þat hem leste
 That *with* hem / sholde I neuere lyue in reste
 ffor sondry scoles / maken sotile clerkis
 Womman of manye scoles / half a clerk' is 1428
 But certeynly / a yong' thyng' may men gye
 Right as men may / warm wex *with* handes plye
 Wherefore / I sey yow pleynly / in a clause
 I wol noon oold wyf han / for this cause 1432
 ffor if so were / þat I hadde swich myschañce
 That I in hire / ne koude han no plesañce
 Thanne sholde I lede my lyf in Auoutrye
 And streight' vn-to the deuel / whan I dye 1436
 Ne children / sholde I none vp on hire geten
 Yet were me leuere / þat houndes had me eten
 Than þat myn heritage sholde falle
 In straunge hand / and this I telle yow alle 1440
 I dote nat I woot the cause why ?
 Men sholde wedde / and forthermoore woot I
 Ther speketh / many a man of mariage
 That woot namoore of it' than woot my page 1444
 ffor whiche causes / man sholde take a wyf /
 Siththe / he may nat lyuen chaast his lyf /
 Take hym a wyf' *with* greet deuocioñ [leaf 109]
 By cause / of leueful procreacioñ 1448
 Of children / to thonour of god aboue
 And nat oonly / for paramour or loue
 And for they sholde / leccherye eschue
 And yelde hir dettes / whan þat they ben due 1452

Or for that ech of hem / sholde helpen oother
 In meschief / as a suster shal the brother
 And lyue in chastitee / ful holily
 But sires by youre leue / that am nat I 1456
 ffor god be thanked / I dar make auaunt'
 I feele my lymes / stark/ and suffisaunt'
 To do / al that a man bilongeth to
 I woot my seluen best' what I may do 1460
 Though I be hoor / I fare as dooth a tree
 That blometh / er þat fruyt ywoxen bee
 And blosmy tree / nys neither drye ne deed
 I feele me / nowhere hoor / but on myn heed 1464
 Myn herte / and alle my lymes been as grene
 As laurer / thurgh the yeer / is for to sene
 And syn þat ye / han herd al myn entente
 I prey yow / to my wyl / ye wole assente 1468
Diuerse men / diuersely hym tolde
 Of mariage / manye ensamples oldo
 Somme blamed it / somme preyed it certeyn
 But atte laste / shortly for to seyn 1472
 As al day / falleth altercacioñ
 Bitwixen freendes in disputisoñ
 Ther fil a stryf / bitwixe hise bretheren two
 Of whiche / that oon was cleped Placebo 1476
 Iustinus soothly / called was that oother
 ¶ Placebo seyde / o Ianuarie brother ¶ Placebo
 fful litel nede / hadde ye my lord so deere
 Conseil to axe / of any that is heere 1480
 But þat ye been / so ful of sapience
 That yow ne liketh / for youre heighe prudence
 To weyuen / fro the word of Salomon
 This word seyde he / vn to vs euerychon 1484
 Wirk' alle thyng' by conseil / thus seyde he
 And thanne / shaltow nat repente thee
 But though þat Salomon / spak swich a word'
 Myn owene deere brother / and my lord 1488

So wysly / god my soule brynge at reste	
I holde / youre owene conseil is the beste	
ffor brother myn / of me taak this motyf	
I haue now been / a Court man al my lyf	1492
And god it woot though I vnworthy be	
I haue stonden / in ful greet degree	
Abouten lordes / of ful heigh estaat	[leaf 109, back]
Yet hadde I neuere / with noon of hem debaat	1496
I neuere hem contraried trewely	
I woot wel / that my lord kan moore than I	
What that he seith / I holde it ferme and stable	
I seye the same / or elles thyng semblable	1500
A ful greet fool / is any conseilour	
That serueth any lord / of heigh honour	
That dar presume / or elles thenken it	
That his conseil / sholde passe his lordes wit	1504
Nay / lordes been no fooles by my fay	
Ye han youre seluen / seyde heer to day	
So heigh sentence / so holily and weel	
That I consente / and conferme euerydeel	1508
Youre wordes alle / and youre opinioun	
By god / ther nys no man / in al this toun	
Nyn Ytaille / that koude bet han sayd	
Crist halt hym / of this conseil ful wel apayd	1512
And trewely / it is an heigh corage	
Of any man / that stapen is in age	
To take a yong wyf by my fader kyn	
Youre herte hangeth / on a ioly pyn	1516
Dooth now in this matiere / right as yow leste	
ffor finally / I holde it for the beste	
I ustinus / þat ay stille sat and herde	¶ Iustinus
Right in this wise / he to Placebo answerde	1520
Now brother myn / be pacient I preye	
Syn ye han seyde / and herkneth what I seye	
¶ Senek among hise othere wordes wyse	
Seith / þat a man oghte hym right wel auyse	1524

To whom / he yeueth his lond / or his catel
 And syn I oghte / auyse me right wel
 To whom I yeue my good / away fro me
 Wel muchel moore / I oghte auysed be 1528
 To whom I yeue my body / for alwey
 I warne yow wel / it is no childes pley
 To take a wyf with-outen auyusement'
 Men moste enquere / this is myn assent' 1532
 Wher she be wys / or sobre / or dronkelewe
 Or proud / or elles ootherweys a shrewe
 A chidestere / or wastour of thy good
 Or riche / or poore / or elles mannyssh wood 1536
 Al be it so / that no man fynden shal
 Noon in this world / that trotteth hool in al
 Ne man ne beest / which as men koude deuyse
 But natheles / it oghte ynough suffise 1540
 With any wyf / if so were that she hadde
 Mo goode thewes / than hire vices badde
 And al this / axeth leyser / for tenquere [leaf 110]
 ffor god it woot I haue wept many a teere 1544
 fful pryuely / syn I haue had a wyf
 Preyse who so wole / a wedded mannes lyf'
 Certein I fynde in it but cost and care
 And obseruances / of alle blisses bare 1548
 And yet god woot my neighebores aboute
 And namely / of wommen many a route
 Seyn þat I haue / the mooste stedefast wyf'
 And eek / the mekeste oon / that bereth lyf' 1552
 But I woot best where wryngeth me my sho
 Ye mowe for me / right as yow liketh do
 Auyseth yow / ye been a man of age
 How that ye entren / in to mariage 1556
 And namely / with a yong wyf / and a fair
 By hym þat made water / erthe / and air
 The yongeste man / þat is in al this route
 Is bisy ynough / to bryngen it aboute 1560

To han his wyf allone / trusteth me
 Ye shul nat plesen hire / fully yeres thre
 This is to seyn / to doon hire ful plesaunce
 A wyf axeth / ful many an obseruaunce 1564
 I prey yow / þat ye be nat yuele apayd
 ¶ Wel quod this Ianuarie / and hastow ysayd
 Straw for thy Senek / and for thy prouerbes
 I counte nat a panyer ful of herbes 1568
 Of scole termes // wyser men than thow
 As thou hast herd / assenteden right now
 To my purpos / Placebo / what sey ye ?
 ¶ I seye / it is a cursed man quod he 1572
 That letteth matrimoigne sikerly
 And with that word / they rysen sodeynly
 And been assented / fully þat he sholde
 Be wedded / whanne hym list and where he wolde 1576
Heigh fantasye / and curious bisynesse
 fro day to day / gan in the soule impresse
 Of Ianuarie / aboute his mariage
 Many fair shape / and many a fair visage 1580
 Ther passeth thurgh his herte / nyght by nyght
 And who so tooke a Mirour / polissed bryght
 And sette it in a commune Market place
 Thanne sholde he se / ful many a figure pace 1584
 By his Mirour / and in the same wyse
 Gan Ianuarie / inwith his thoght deuyse
 Of maydens / whiche þat dwellen hym bisydo
 He wiste nat / wher þat he myghte abyde 1588
 ffor if þat oon / haue beaute / in hir face
 Another stant so / in the peples grace
 ffor hire sadnesse / and hire benyngnytee [leaf 110, back]
 That of the peple / grettest voys hath she 1592
 And somme were riche / and hadden badde name
 But nathelees / bitwixe earnest and game
 He atte laste / apoynted hym on oon
 And lect alle othere / from his herte goon 1596

And chees hire / of his owene auctoritee
 ffor loue is blynd al day / and may nat see
 And whan that he was / in his bed ybroghit
 He purtreied / in his herte and in his thoghit 1600
 Hir fresshe beautee / and hir age tendre
 Hir myddel smal / hire armes longe and sklendre
 Hir wise gouernañce / hir gentillesse
 Hir wommanly berynge / and hire sadnesse 1604
 And whan that he / on hire was condescended
 Hym thoughte / his choys myghite nat ben amended
 ffor whan þat he hym self / concluded hadde
 Hym thoughte / ech oother mannes wit so badde 1608
 That inpossible / it were to repplye
 Agayn his choys / this was his fantasye
 Hise freendes sente he to / at his instañce
 And preyed hem / to doon hym that plesañce 1612
 That hastily / they wolden to hym come
 He wolde abregge hir labour alle and some
 Nedeth namoore / for hym to go ne ryde
 He was apoynted / ther he wolde abyde 1616
 ¶ Placebo cam / and eek hise freendes soone
 And alderfirst he bad hem alle a boone
 That noon of hem / none Argumentes make
 Agayn the purpos / which þat he hath take 1620
 Which purpos / was plesant to god seyde he
 And verray ground / of his prosperitee
 ¶ He seyde / ther was a mayden in the toun
 Which þat of beautee / hadde greet renoun 1624
 Al were it so / she were / of smal degree
 Suffiseth hym / hir yowthe / and hir beautee
 Which mayde he seyde / he wolde han to his wyf
 To lede in ese / and hoolynesse his lyf 1628
 And thanked god / þat he myghite han hire al
 That no wight / his blisse parten shal
 And preyde hem / to laboure in this nede
 And shapen / þat he faille nat to spede 1632

ffor thanne he seyde / his spirit was at ese
 Thanne is quod he / no thyng' may me displese
 Saue o thyng' priketh in my conscience
 The which I wol reherce / in youre presence 1636
 ¶ I haue quod he / herd seyd ful yoore ago
 Ther may no man / han parfite blisses two
 This is to seye / in erthe and eek' in heuene [leaf 111]
 ffor though he kepe hym / fro the synnes seuene 1640
 And eek/ from euery branche of thilke tree
 Yet is ther/ so parfit felicitie
 And so greet ese / and lust in mariage
 That euere I am agast/ now in myn age 1644
 That I shal lede now / so myrie a lyf'
 So delicat' with-outen wo and stryf'
 That I shal haue / myn heuene in erthe heere
 ffor sith þat verray heuene / is boghit so deere 1648
 With tribulacion' / and greet penance
 How sholde I thanne / þat lyue in swich plesaunce
 As alle wedded men / doon with hire wyuus
 Come to the blisse / ther crist eterne on lyue ys 1652
 This is my drede / and ye my bretheren tweye
 Assoilleth me / this question' I preye
Iustinus / which þat hated his folye ¶ Iustinus
 Answerde anon / right in his iaperye 1656
 And for he wolde / his longe tale abregge
 He wolde / noon auctoritee allegge
 But seyde sire / so ther be noon obstacle
 Oother than this / god of his hygh myracle 1660
 And of his hygh mercy / may so for yow wirche
 That er ye haue youre right' of hooly chirche
 Ye may repente / of wedded mannes lyf'
 In which ye seyn / ther is no wo ne stryf' 1664
 And elles god forbede / but he sente
 A wedded man / hym grace to repente
 Wel ofte / rather than a sengle man
 And therefore sire / the beste reed I kan 1668.

Dispeire yow noghit' but haue in youre memorie
 Paraunter / she may be youre purgatorie
 She may be goddes meene / and goddes whippe
 Thanne shal youre soule / vp to heuene skippe 1672
 Swifter/ than dooth an Arwe / out of the bowe
 I hope to god / her-after shul ye knowe
 That ther nys / no so greet felicitee
 In mariage / ne neuere mo shal bee 1676
 That yow shal lette / of youre sauacion
 So that ye vse / as skile is and reson
 The lustes of youre wyf attempely
 And þat ye plese hire nat to amorously 1680
 And þat ye kepe yow eek/ from oother synne
 My tale is doon / for my wit is thynne
 Beth nat agast' her-of / my brother deere
 But lat vs waden / out of this mateere 1684
 The wyf of Bathe / if ye han vnderstonde
 Of mariage / which ye haue on honde
 Declared hath ful wel / in litel space [leaf 111, back]
 ffareth now wel / god haue yow in his grace 1688
 And with this word / this Iustyn and his brother
 Han take hir leue / and ech of hem of oother
 ffor whan they saughe that' it moste be
 They wroghten so / by sly and wys trettee 1692
 That she this mayden / which þat Mayus highte
 As hastily / as euere that she myghite
 Shal wedded be / vn-to this Ianuarie
 I trowe it were to longe yow to tarie 1696
 If I yow tolde / of euery scrit and bond
 By which / þat she was feffed in his lond
 Or for to herknen / of hir riche array
 But finally / ycomen is the day 1700
 That to the chirche / bothe be they went'
 ffor to receyue the hooly sacrement
 fforth comth the preest' with stole aboute his nekke
 And bad hire be lyk' to Sarra and Rebekke 1704

In wysdom and in trouthe of mariage
 And seyde hir orisons / as is vsage
 And croucheth hem / and bad god sholde hem blesse
 And made al siker ynogh / with hoolynesse 1708
 ¶ Thus been they wedded / with solempnitee
 And at the feeste / sitteth he and she
 With othere worthy folk' vp on the deys
 Al ful of ioye and blisse is the paleys 1712
 And ful of Instrumentz / and of vitaille
 The moste deyn-teuous / of all Ytaille
 Biforn hem / stoden Instrumentz of swich soun
 That Orpheus / ne of Thebes Amphiouz 1716
 Ne maden neuere / swich a melodye
 ¶ At euery cours / thanne cam loud Mynstraleye
 That neuere tromped Ioab / for to heere
 Nor he Theodomas / yet half so cleere 1720
 At Thebes / whan the Citee was in doute
 Bacus / the wyn hem skynketh al aboute
 And Venus / laugheth vp-on euery wight'
 ffor Ianuarie / was bicomme hir knyght' 1724
 And wolde bothe / assayen his corage
 In libertee / and eek in mariage
 And with hire fyrbrond' / in hire hand aboute
 Daunceth / biforn the bryde and al the route 1728
 And certainly / I dar right wel seyn this
 Ymeneus / that god of weddyng is
 Saugh' neuere his lyf' so myrie a wedded man
 Hoold thou thy pees / thou poete Marcian 1732
 That writest vs / that ilke weddyng' murie
 Of hire Philologie / and hym Mercurie
 And of the songes / that the Muses songe [leaf 112]
 To smal is bothe thy penne / and eek thy tonge 1736
 ffor to descryuen / of this mariage
 Whan tendre youthe / hath wedded stoupyng age
 Ther is swich myrthe / þat it may nat be writen
 Assayeth it youre self / thanne may ye witen 1740

If that I lye or noon / in this matiere
 ¶ Mayus that sit / with so benyngne a chiere
 Hire to biholde / it semed fairye
 Queene Ester / looked neuere with swich an eye 1741
 On Assuer / so meke a look hath she
 I may yow nat deuysel / al hir beautee
 But thus muche of hire beautee telle I may
 That she was lyk / the brighte morwe of May 1748
 ffulfild / of alle beautee and plesaunce
 ¶ This Ianuarie / is rauysshed in a traunce
 At euery tyme / he looked on hir face
 But in his herte / he gan hire to manace 1752
 That he that nyght in Armes wolde hire streyne
 Harder / than euere Parys dide Eleyne
 But nathclees / yet hadde he greet pitee
 That thilke nyght offenden hire moste he 1756
 And thoughte allas / o tendre creature
 Now wolde god / ye myghte wel endure
 Al my corage / it is so sharpe and keene
 I am agast ye shul it nat susteene 1760
 But god forbede / þat I dide al my myght
 Now wolde god / þat it were woxen nyght
 And that the nyght wolde lasten eueremo
 I wolde / that al this peple were ago 1764
 And finally / he dooth al his labour
 As he best myghte / sauynge his honour
 To haste hem fro the mete / in subtil wyse
 ¶ The tyme cam / that resoñ was to ryse 1768
 And after that men daunce and drynken faste
 And spices / al aboute the hous they caste
 And ful of ioye and blisse is euery man
 All but a Squyer / highte Damyan 1772
 Which carf biforn the knyght ful many a day
 He was so rauysshed / on his lady May
 That for the verray peyne / he was ny wood
 Almost he swelte / and swowned ther he stood 1776

- So soore / hath Venus hurt hym *with* hire brond
 As *þat* she bar it' daunsynge in hire hond
 And to his bed / he wente hym hastily
 Namore of hym / at this tyme speke [I] 1780
 But there I lete hym wepe ynogh and pleyne
 Til fresshe May / wol rewen on his peyne
- O** perilous fyr / that in the bedstraw bredeth ¶ Auctor
 O famulier foo / that his seruyce bedeth [leaf 112, bk] 1784
- O seruant traytour / false hoomly hewe
 Lyk to the naddre / in bosom sly vntrewe
 God shilde vs alle / from youre aqueyntañce
 O Ianuarie / dronken in plesance 1788
 In mariage / se how thy Damyan
 Thyn owene squier / and thy born man
 Entendeth / for to do thee vileynye
 God graunte thee / thyn hoomly fo tespye 1792
 ffor in this world / nys worse pestilence
 Than hoomly foo / al day in thy presence
 ¶ Parfourned hath the sonne / his Ark' diurne
 No lenger / may the body of hym soirne 1796
 On thorisonte / as in that latitude
 Night *with* his Mantel *þat* is derk' and rude
 Gan ouersprede the Hemysperie aboute
 ffor which / departed is / this lusty route 1800
 ffro Ianuarie / with thank on euery syde
 Hoom to hir hous / lustily they ryde
 Where as they doon hir thynges / as hem leste
 And whan they sye hir tyne / goon to reste 1804
 Soone after that' this hastif Ianuarie
 Wolde go to bedde / he wolde no lenger tarye
 He drynketh Ypocras / Clarree and Vernage
 Of spices hoote / tencreessen his corage 1808
 And many a letuarie / hath he ful fyn
 Swiche as the Monk' daun Constantyn
 Hath writen / in his book de coitu
 To eten hem alle / he nas no thyng eschu 1812

And to hise priuce freendes / thus seyde he
 ffor goddes loue / as soone as it may be
 Lat voyden al this hous / in curteys wyse
 And they han doon / right as he wol deuyses 1816
 Men drynken / and the trauers drawe anon
 The bryde / was broght a bedde / as stille as stoon
 And whan the bed / was with the preest yblessed
 Out of the chambre / hath euery wight hym dressed 1820
 And Ianuarie / hath faste in Armes take
 His fresshe May / his Paradys his make
 He lulleth hire / he kisseth hire ful ofte
 With thilke Brustles / of his berd vnsofte 1824
 Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh / sharpe as brere
 ffor he was shaue al newe / in his manere
 He rubbeth hire / aboute hir tendre face
 And seyde thus / allas I moot trespace 1828
 To yow my spouse / and yow greetly offende
 Er tyme come / þat I wil down descende
 But natheles / considereth this quod he [leaf 113]
 Ther nys no werkman / what so euere he be 1832
 That may bothe / werke wel and hastily
 This wol be doon at leyser partitly
 It is no fors / how longe þat we pleye
 In trewe wedlok / wedded be we tweye 1836
 And blessed be the yok / þat we been Inne
 ffor in [oure] Actes / we mowe do no synne
 A man / may do no synne with his wyf
 Ne hurte hym seluen / with his owene knyft 1840
 ffor we han leue / to pleye vs by the lawe
 Thus laboureth he / til þat the day gan dawne
 And thanne he taketh a sope / in fyne clarree
 And vpright in his bed / thanne sitteth he 1844
 And after that he sang ful loude and cleere
 And kiste his wyf / and made wantowne cheere
 He was al coltisshe / ful of ragerye
 And ful of Iargon / as a flekked pye 1848

The slakke skyn / aboute his nekke shaketh
 Whil þat he sang / so chaunteth he and craketh
 But god woot what þat May thoughte in hir herte
 Whan she hym saugh / vp sittynge in his sherte 1852
 In his nyght cappe / and with his nekke lene
 She preyseth nat his pleyng worth a bene
 Thanne seide he thus / my reste wol I take
 Now day is come / I may no lenger wake 1856
 And doun he leyde his heed / and sleepe til pryme
 And afterward / whan þat he saugh his tyme
 Vp ryseth Ianuarie / but fresshe May
 Heeld hire chambre / vn-to the fourthe day 1860
 As vsage is / of wyues / for the beste
 ffor euery labour / som tyme moot han reste
 Or elles / longe may he nat endure
 This is to seyn / no lyues creature 1864
 Be it of fyssh / or bryd / or beest or man
 Now wol I speke / of woful Damyan
 That langwisseth for loue / as ye shul heere
 Therefore / I speke to hym in this manere 1868
 ¶ I seye / o sely Damyan allas ¶ Auctor
 Andswere to my demaunde / as in this cas
 How shaltow / to thy lady fresshe May
 Telle thy wo / she wole alwey seye nay 1872
 Eek if thou speke / she wol thy wo biwrewe
 God be thyn helpe / I kan no better seye
 ¶ This sike Damyan / in Venus fyr
 So brenneth / that he dyeth for desyr 1876
 ffor which / he putte his lyf in auenture
 No lenger myghte he / in this wise endure
 But priuely / a penner gan he borwe [leaf 113, back]
 And in a lettre / wroot he al his sorwe 1880
 In manere of a compleynt or a lay
 Vn-to his faire / fresshe lady May
 And in a purs of sylk / heng on his sherte
 He hath it put and leyde it at his herte 1884

The moone / that at Noon was thilke day
 That Ianuarie / hath wedded fresshe May
 In two of Tawr / was in to Cancre glyden
 So longe hath Mayus / in hir chambre byden 1888
 As custume is / vn-to thise nobles alle
 A bryde / shal nat eten in the halle
 Til dayes foure / or .iiij. dayes atte leeste
 Ypassed been / thanne lat hire go to feeste 1892
 The fourthe day compleet' fro Noon to Noon
 Whan þat/ the heighe masse was ydoon
 In halle / sit this Ianuarie and May
 As fressh / as is the brighte someres day 1896
 And so bifel / how that this goode man
 Remembred hym / vpon this Damyan
 And seyde / Seynte Marie / how may this be
 That Damyan / entendeth nat to me 1900
 Is he ay syk' / or how may this bityde
 Hise squieres / whiche that stooden ther bisydo
 Excused hym / by cause of his siknesse
 Which letted hym / to doon his bisynesse 1904
 Noon oother cause / myghte make hym tarye
 ¶ That me forthynketh / quod this Ianuarie
 He is a gentil squier / by my trouthe
 If that he deyde / it were harm and routhe 1908
 He is as wys / discreet/ and as secree
 As any man / I woot of his degree
 And ther-to manly / and eek seruysable
 And for to been a thrifty man right able 1912
 But after mete / as soone as euere I may
 I wol my self visite hym and eek May
 To doon hym / al the confort that I kan
 And for that word / hym blessed euery man 1916
 That of his bountee / and his gentillesse
 He wolde so conforten in siknesse
 His squier / for it was a gentil dede
 Dame quod this Ianuarie / taak good hede 1920

At after Noon / ye *with* youre wommen alle
 Whan ye han been in chambre / out of this halle
 That alle ye / go se this Damyan
 Dooth hym disport/ he is a gentil man 1924
 And telleth hym / that I wol hym visite
 Hauē I no thyng' but rested me a lite
 And spede yow faste / for I wole abyde [leaf 114]
 Til that ye slepe / faste by my syde 1928
 And *with* that word / he gan to hym to calle
 A Squier / that was Marchal of his halle
 And tolde hym *certeyn* thynges / what he wolde
 ¶ This fresshe May / hath streight hir wey yholde 1932
 With alle hir wommen / vn-to Damyan
 Doun by his beddes syde / sit she than
 Confortynge hym / as goodly as she may
 This Damyan / whan that his tyme he say 1936
 In secree wise / his purs and eek his bille
 In which *þat* he / ywriten hadde his wille
 Hath put in to hire hand / with-uten moore
 Saue *þat* he siketh / wonder depe and soore 1940
 And softly to hire / right thus seyde he
 Mercy / and that ye nat discouere me
 ffor I am deed / if that this thyng/ be kyd
 This purs hath she / inwith hir bosom hyd 1944
 And wente hire wey / ye gete namoore of me
 But vn-to Ianuarie / ycomen is she
 That on his beddes syde / sit ful softe
 He taketh hire / and kisseth hire ful ofte 1948
 And leyde hym doun to slepe / and that anon
 She feyned hire / as that she moste gon
 Ther as ye woot' *þat* euery wight moot neede
 And whan she of this bille / hath taken heede 1952
 She rente it/ al to cloutes atte laste
 And in the pryuee / softly it caste
Who studieth now / but faire fresshe May
 Adoun / by olde Ianuarie she lay 1956

- That sleepe / til þat the coughē / hath hym awaked
 Anon he preyde hire / strepen hire al naked
 He wolde of hire he seyde / han som plesañce
 And seyde / hir clothes / dide hym encombrañce 1960
 And she obeyeth / be hire lief or looth
 But lest ye precious folk / be with me wrooth
 How that he wroghte / I dar nat to yow telle
 Or wheither / þat hire thoughte it Paradys or helle 1964
 But heere I lete hem / werken in hir wyse
 Til euensong rong' and þat they moste aryse
 Were it by destynce / or by auenture
 Were it by Influence / or by nature 1968
 Or constellacion / that in swich estaat'
 The heuene / stood that tyme fortunaat'
 Was for to putte a bille / of Venus werkes
 ffor alle thyng hath tyme / as seyn thise clerkes 1972
 To any womman / for to gete hire loue
 I kan nat seye / but grete god aboue
 That knoweth / that noon Act' is causelees [leaf 114, back]
 He deme of al / for I wole holde my pees 1976
 But sooth is this / how that this fresshe May
 Hath take / swich impression that day
 ffor pitee / of this sike Damyan
 That from hire herte / she ne dryue kan 1980
 The remembrance / for to doon hym ese
 Certeyn thoghhte she / whom þat this thyng displese
 I rekke noght / for heere I hym assure
 To loue hym best' of any creature 1984
 Though he namoore hadde than his sherte
 Lo pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
 ¶ Heere may ye se / how excellent franchise
 In wommen is / whan they hem narwe auyse 1988
 Som tyrant is / as ther be many oon
 That hath an herte / as hard / as any stoon
 Which wolde / han lat hym storuen in the place
 Wel rather / than han graunted hym hire grace 1992

And hem reioysen / in hire crueel pryde
 And rekke nat' to been an homycide
 ¶ This gentil May / fulfilled of pitee
 Right of hire hand / a lettre made she 1996
 In which she graunteth hym hire verrey grace
 Ther lakketh noght/ oonly / but day and place
 Wher þat she myghite / vn-to his lust suffice
 ffor it shal be / right as he wole deuyse 2000
 And whan she saugh hir tyme vp on a day
 To visite this Damyan / gooth May
 And sotilly this lettre / down she threste
 Vnder his pilwe / rede it if hym leste 2004
 She taketh hym by the hand / and harde hym twiste
 So secrely / that no wight of it wiste
 And bad hym been al hool / and forth he wente
 To Ianuarie / whan þat he for hym sente 2008
Vp riseth Damyan / the nexte morwe
 Al passed was / his siknesse and his sorwe
 He kembeth hym / he preyneth hym and pyketh
 He dooth / al that his lady lust and lyketh 2012
 And eek to Ianuarie / he gooth as lowe
 As euere dide / a dogge for the bowe
 He is so pleasant/ vn-to euery man
 ffor craft is al / who so that do it kan 2016
 That euery wight/ is fayn to speke hym good
 And fully / in his lady grace he stood
 Thus lete I Damyan / aboute his nede
 And in my tale / forth I wol procede 2020
 ¶ Somme clerkes / holden that felicitee
 Stant in delit/ and therefore certeyn he^s
 This noble Ianuarie / with al his myghit' [leaf 115]
 In honeste wyse / as longeth to a knyght' 2024
 Shoope hym to lyue / ful deliciously
 His housynge / his array / as honestly
 To his degree / was maked as a kynges
 Amonges othere / of hise honeste thynges 2028

- He made a gardyn / walled al with stoon
 So fair a gardyn / woot I nowher noon
 ffor out of doute / I verraily suppose
 That he / þat wroot the romance of the Rose 2032
 Ne koude of it/ the beautee wel deuyse
 Ne Priapus / ne mygh̄te nat suffice
 Though he be god of gardyns / for to telle
 The beautee of the gardyn / and the welle 2036
 That stood vnder a laurer / alwey grene
 fful ofte tyme / he Pluto and his queene
 Proserpina / and al hire fairye
 Disporten hem / and maken melodye 2040
 Aboute that welle / and daunced as men tolde
 ¶ This noble knygh̄t this Ianuarie the olde
 Swich deyntee hath / in it to walke and pleye
 That he wol no wigh̄t suffren bere the keye 2044
 Saue he hym self/ for of the smale wyket'
 He baar alwey / of siluer a Clyket'
 With which / whan þat hym leste he it vnshette
 And whan he wolde / paye his wyf hir dette 2048
 In Somer seson) / thider wolde he go
 And May his wyf/ and no wight but they two
 And thynges / whiche þat were nat doon a bedde
 He in the gardyn / parfourned hem and spedde 2052
 And in this wyse / many a murye day
 Lyued this Ianuarie / and fresshe May
 But worldly Ioye / may nat alwey dure
 To Ianuarie / ne to no creature . 2056
- O** sodeyn hape / o thou fortune Instable ¶ Auctor ॐ
 Lyk to the Scorpion / so deceyuable
 That flaterest with thyn heed / whan thou wolt synge
 Thy tayl is deeth / thurgh̄ thyn enuenymynge 2060
 O brotil Ioye / o sweete venym queynte
 O Monstre / that so subtilly kanst peynte
 Thy yiftes / vnder hewe of stidefastnesse
 That thou deceyuest bothe moore and lesse 2064

Why hastow Ianuarie / thus deceyued
 That haddest hym / for thy ful freend receyued
 And now thou hast' biraft' hym bothe hise eyen
 ffor sorwe of which / desireth he to dyen 2068

¶ Allas / this noble Ianuarie free
 Amydde his lust' and his prosperitee
 Is woxen blynd / and that al sodeynly [leaf 115, back]
 He wepeth and he wayleth pitously 2072
 And ther with al / the fyr of Ialousie
 Lest þat his wyf/ sholde falle in swich folye
 So brente his herte / that he wolde fayn
 That som man / bothe hym *and* hire had slayn 2076
 ffor neither after his deeth / nor in his lyf'
 Ne wolde he / þat she were loue ne wyf'
 But euere lyue as wydwe in clothes blake
 Soul as the turtle / þat lost hath hire make 2080
 But atte laste / after a Monthe or tweye
 His sorwe gan aswage / sooth to seye
 ffor whan he wiste / it may noon oother be
 He paciently / took' his Aduersitee 2084
 Saue out of doute / he may nat forgoon
 That he nas Ialous / euere moore in oon
 Which Ialousye / it was so outrageous
 That neither in halle / nyn noon oother hous 2088
 Nyn noon oother place / neuerthemo
 He nolde suffre hire / for to ryde or go
 But if þat he / had hond on hire alway
 ffor which ful ofte / wepeth fresshe May 2092
 That loueth Damyan / so benyngnely
 That she moot' outhur dyen sodeynly
 Or elles / she moot han hym as hir leste
 She wayteth / whan hir herte wolde breste 2096

¶ Vp on that oother syde Damyan
 Bicomen is / the sorwefulleste man
 That euere was / for neither nyght ne day
 Ne myghte he speke a word to fresshe May 2100

- As to his purpos / of no swich mateere
 But if that Ianuarie / moste it heere
 That hadde an hand / vp on hire eueremo
 But natheles / by writyng to and fro 2104
 And priuce signes / wiste he what she mente
 And she knew eek / the fyn of his entente
- O** Ianuarie / what myghte it thee auaille ¶ Auctor
 Though thou myghtest se / as fer as shippes saille
 ffor as good is / blynd deceyued be 2109
 As to be deceyued / whan a man may se
 ¶ Lo Argus / which þat hadde / an hondred eyen
 ffor al þat euere / he koude poure or pryen 2112
 Yet was he blent / and god woot so been mo
 That wenen wisly / that it be nat so
 Passe ouer is an esc / I sey namoore
 ¶ This fresshe May / þat I spak' of so yoore 2116
 In warm wex / hath emprented the clyket'
 That Ianuarie bar / of the smale wyket'
 By which / in to his gardyn ofte he wente [leaf 116]
 And Damyant / that knew al hire entente 2120
 The clyket' countrefeted pryuely
 Ther nys namoore to seye / but hastily
 Som wonder / by this clyket' shal bityde
 Which ye shul heeren / if ye wole abyde 2124
 ¶ O noble Ouyde / ful sooth seystou god woot' ¶ Auctor ☉
 What sleighte is it / though it be long and hoot'
 That he nyl fynde it out / in som manere
 By Piramus / and Tesbee / may men leere 2128
 Thogh they were kept' ful longe streite oueral
 They been accorded / rownyng thurgħ a wal
 Ther no wight / koude han founde out swich a sleighte
 ¶ But now to purpos / er þat dayes eighte 2132
 Were passed / er the Monthe of Iuyl bifille
 That Ianuarie / hath caught so greet a wille
 Thurgh eggyng of his wyf' hym for to pleye
 In his gardyn / and no wight but they tweye 2136

That in a morwe / vn-to this May seith he
 Rys vp my wyf/ my loue / my lady free
 The turtle voys is herd / my dowue sweete
 The wynter is goon / with his¹ reynes weete [his *interlined*
in a later hand]
 Com forth now / with thyne eyen columbyn 2141
 How fairer been thy brestes / than is wyn
 The gardyn / is enclosed al aboute
 Com forth my white spouse / out of doute 2144
 Thou hast me wounded / in myn herte / o wyf
 No spot of thee / ne knew I al my lyf
 Come forth / and lat vs taken som disport
 I chees thee / for my wyf and my confort 2148
 ¶ Swiche olde lewed wordes vsed he
 On Damyan / a signe made she
 That he sholde go biforn / with his cliket
 This Damyan thanne / hath opened the wyket 2152
 And In he stirte / and that in swich manere
 That no wight myghte it se / neither yheere
 And stille he sit/ vnder a busshe anon
 ¶ This Ianuarie / as bynd as is a stoon 2156
 With Mayus in his hand / and no wight mo
 In to his fresshe gardyn is ago
 And clapte to / the wyket sodeynly
 ¶ Now wyf quod he / heere nys but thou and I 2160
 That art the creature / that I best loue
 ffor by that lord / þat sit in heuene aboute
 Leuere ich hadde / to dyen on a knyf
 Than thee offende / trewe deere wyf 2164
 ffor goddes sake / thenk how I thee chees
 Noght for no coueitise doutelees
 But oonly / for the loue / I had to thee [leaf 116, back]
 And though þat I be oold / and may nat see 2168
 Beth to me trewe / and I shal telle yow why^s
 Thre thynges / certes / shal ye wynne ther by
 first loue of Crist/ and to youre self honour
 And al myn heritage / toun and tour 2172

I yeue it yow / maketh chartres as yow leste
 This shal be doon tomorwe er sonne reste
 So wisly / god my soule brynge in blisse
 I prey yow first/ in couenat ye me kisse 2176
 And though þat I be Ialous wyte me noght
 Ye been so depe / enprented in my thoght
 That whan I considere youre beautee
 And ther with al / the vnlikly elde of me 2180
 I may nat certes / though I sholde dye
 florbere / to been out of youre compaignye
 ffor verray loue / this is with outen doute
 Now kys me wyf/ and lat vs rome aboute 2184
 ¶ This fresshe May / whan she thise wordes herde
 Benyngnely / to Ianuarie answerde
 But first' and forward / she bigan to wepe
 I haue quod she / a soule for to kepe 2188
 As wel as ye / and also myn honour
 And of my wyfhod / thilke tendre flour
 Which þat I haue / assured in youre hond
 Whan þat the preest' to yow my body bond 2192
 Wherfore / I wole answerde / in this manere
 By the leue of yow / my lord so deere
 I prey to god / þat neuere dawe the day
 That I ne sterue / as foule as womman may 2196
 If euere I do / vn to my kyn that shame
 Or elles / I empeyre so my name
 That I be fals / and if I do that lakke
 Do strepe me / and put me in a sakke 2200
 And in the nexte ryuer / do me drenche
 I am a gentil womman and no wenche
 Why speke ye thus /^s but men been euere vntrewe
 And wommen / haue répreue of yow ay newe 2204
 Ye han noon oother contenance I leue
 But speke to vs / of vntrust' and repreue
 ¶ And with that word / she saugh wher Damyan
 Sat in the busshe / and coughen she bigan 2208

And with hir fynger / signes made she
 That Damyan / sholde clymbe vp on a tree
 That charged was with fruyt and vp he wente
 ffor verrailly / he knew al hire entente 2212
 And euery signe / þat she koude make
 Wel bet than Ianuarie / hir owene make
 ffor in a lettre / she hadde toold hym al [leaf 117]
 Of this matere / how he werchen shal 2216
 And thus I lete hym sitte / vp on the pyrie
 And Ianuarie and May romynge myrie
Bright was the day / and blew the firmament
 Phebus hath of gold / hise stremes down ysent 2220
 To gladen euery flour with his warmnesse
 He was that tyme / in Geminis as I gesse
 But litel / fro his declynacion
 Of Cancer / Iouis exaltacion 2224
 And so bifel / that brighte morwe tyde
 That in that gardyn / in the ferther syde
 Pluto / that is kyng of ffairye
 And many a lady / in his compaignye 2228
 folwynge his wyf / the queene Proserpyne
 Ech after oother / right as a lyne
 Whil þat she gadered / floures in the mede
 In Claudyan / ye may the stories rede 2232
 And in his grisely Carte / he hire sette
 This kyng of ffairye / thanne adoun hym sette
 Vp on a bench of turues / fressh and grene
 And right anon / thus seyde he to his queene 2236
 ¶ My wyf quod he / ther may no wight seye nay
 Thexperience / so preueth euery day
 The tresons / whiche þat wommen doon to man
 Ten hondred thousand / tellen I kan 2240
 Notable / of youre vntrouthe and brotilnesse
 O Salomon / wys / and richest of richesse
 ffulfild of sapience / and of worldly glorie
 fful worthy been thy wordes to memorie 2244

To euery wight þat wit and reson kan
 Thus preiseth he yet the bountee of man
 ¶ Amonges a thousand men / yet foond I oon
 But of wommen alle / foond I noon 2248

¶ Thus seith the kyng þat knoweth youre wikkednesse
 And Ihesus filius Syrak as I gesse
 Ne speketh of yow / but seelde reuerence
 A wylde fyr / and corrupt pestilence 2252

So falle vp on youre bodyes yet to nyght
 Ne se ye nat this honorable knyght
 By cause allas / that he is blynd and olde
 His owene man / shal make hym Cokewolde 2256

Lo heere he sit the lechour in the tree
 Now wol I graunten / of my magestee
 Vn-to this olde blynde worthy knyght
 That he shal haue ayeyn hise eyen syght 2260

Whan þat his wyf / wold doon hym vileynye
 Thanne shal he knowen / al hire harlotrye
 Bothe in repreue of hire / and othere mo [leaf 117, back]

¶ Ye shal quod Proserpyne / wol ye so ? 2264

Now by my moodres sires soule I swere
 That I shal yeuen hire suffisant answere
 And alle wommen after / for hir sake
 That though they be / in any gilt ytake 2268

With face boold / they shulle hem self excuse
 And bere hem down / that wolden hem accuse
 ffor lakke of answere / noon of hem shal dyen
 Al hadde man seyn a thyng with bothe hise eyen 2272

Yit shul we wommen / visage it hardily
 And wepe / and swere / and visage it subtilly
 So þat ye men / shul been / as lewed as gees
 What rekketh me / of youre Auctoritees 2276


¶ I woot wel / that this Iew / this Salomon
 ffoond of vs wommen / ffooles many oon
 But though þat he ne foond / no good womman
 Yet hath ther founde / many another man 2280

Wommen ful trewe / ful goode / and vertuous
 Witnesse on hem / þat dwelle in Cristes hous
 With martirdom / they preued hire constance
 The Romayn geestes / eek^t maken remembrance 2284
 Of many a verray / trewe wyf also
 But sire ne be nat wrooth / al be it so
 Though þat he seyde / he foond no good womman
 I prey yow / take the sentence of the man 2288
 He mente thus / that in souereyn bontee
 Nis noor / but god þat sit in Trinitee
 ¶ Ey for verray god / that nys but oon
 What make ye / so mucche of Salomon 2292
 What though he made a temple goddes hous
 What^t though he were / riche and glorious
 So made he eek / a temple of false goddis
 How myghte he do a thyng^t þat moore forbode is 2296
 Pardee / as faire / as ye his name emplastre
 He was a lecchour / and an ydolastre
 And in his elde / he verray god forsook^t
 And if god ne hadde / as seith the book^t 2300
 Yspared for his fadres sake / he sholde
 Haue lost his regne / rather than he wolde
 I sette right noght^t of al the vileynye
 That ye of wommen write / a Boterflye 2304
 I am a womman / nedes moot I speke
 Or elles swelle / til myn herte breke
 ffor sithen he seyde / that we been langleress
 As euere hool / I moote brouke my tresses 2308
 I shal nat spare / for no curteisye
 To speke hym harm / þat wolde vs vileynye
Dame quod this Pluto / be no lenger wroothⁿ [leaf 118]
 I yeue it vp / but sith I swoor myn ooth 2312
 That I wolde / graunten hym his sighte ageyn
 My word shal stonde / I warne yow certeyn
 I am a kyng^t it sit me noght to lye
 ¶ And I quod she / a Queene of ffairye 2316

Hir answere shal she haue I vndertake Lat vs namoore wordes heer-of make ffor sothe / I wol no lenger/ yow contrarie	
¶ Now lat vs / turne agayn to Ianuarie That in the gardyn / with his faire May Syngeth ful murier / than the Papeiay Yow loue I best' and shal and oother noon So longe / aboute the Aleyes is he goon	2320 2324
Til he was come / agayns thilke pyrie Where as this Damyan / sitteth ful myrie Anheigh / among' the fresshe leues grene ¶ This fresshe May / that is so bright and sheene Gan for to syke / and seyde / allas my syde Now sire quod she / for aught þat may bityde I moste han / of the peres that I see Or I moot dye / so soore longeth me	2328 2332
To eten / of the smale peres grene Help for hir loue / þat is of heuene queene I telle yow wel / a womman in my plit' May han to fruyt' so greet an Appetit' That she may dyen / but she of it haue ¶ Allas quod he / þat I ne had heer a knaue That koude clymbe / allas allas quod he That I am blynd' / ye sire no fors quod she	2336 2340
¶ But wolde ye vouche sauf' for goddes sake The pyrie / inwith youre armes for to take ffor wel I woot/ that ye mystruste me Thanne sholde I clymbe / wel ynogh quod she So I my foot' myghte sette vpon youre bak/ ¶ Certes quod he / ther-on shal be no lak' Mighte I yow helpen / with myn herte blood He stoupeth down / and on his bak she stood	2344 2348
And caughte hire by a twiste / and vp she gooth Ladies / I prey yow / þat ye be nat wrooth I kan nat glose / I am a rude man And sodeynly / anon this Damyan	2352

- Gan pullen vp the smok / and In he throng'
 ¶ And whan þat Pluto / saugh this grete wrong'
 To Ianuarie / he gaf agayn his sighte
 And made hym se / as wel as euere he myghite 2356
 And whan þat he / hadde caught his sighte agayn
 Ne was ther neuere / man of thyng' so fayn
 But on his wyf / his thoght was eueremo [leaf 118, back]
 Vp to the tree / he caste hise eyen two 2360
 And saugh þat Damyan / his wyf had dressed
 In swich manere / it may nat been expressed
 But if I wolde / speke vncurteisly
 And vp he yaf / a roryng' and a cry 2364
 As dooth the mooder / whan the child shal dye
 Out helpe / allas / harrow he gan to crye
 O stronge lady stooore / what dostow ?
 ¶ And she answerde / sire what eyleth yow ? 2368
 Haue pacience / and resoñ in youre mynde
 I haue yow holpe / on bothe youre eyen blynde
 Vp peril of my soule / I shal nat lyen
 As me was taught / to heele with youre eyen 2372
 Was no thyng bet' to make yow to see
 Than strugle with a man / vp on a tree
 God woot I dide it / in ful good entente
 ¶ Strugle quod he ? ye algate In it wente 2376
 God yeue yow bothe / on shames deth to dyen
 He swyued thee / I saugh it. with myne eyen
 And elles / be I hanged by the hals
 ¶ Thanne is quod she / my medicyne fals 2380
 ffor certainly / if that ye myghite se
 Ye wolde nat seyn / these wordes vn to me
 Ye han som glymsyng' and no parfit sighte
 ¶ I se quod he / as wel as euere I myghite 2384
 Thonked be god / with bothe myne eyen two
 And by my trouthe / me thoughte he dide thee so
 ¶ Ye maze / maze / goode sire quod she
 This thank haue I / for I haue maad yow see 2388

Allas quod she / that euere I was so kynde
 ¶ Now dame quod he / lat al passe out of mynde
 Com doun my lief' and if I haue myssayd'
 God helpe me so / as I am yuele apayd' 2392
 But by my fader soule / I wende han seyn
 How that this Damyan / hadde by thee leyn
 And þat thy smok' hadde leyn vp on his brest'
 ¶ Ye sire quod she / ye may wene as yow lest' 2396
 But sire / a man / þat waketh out of his sleepe
 He may nat sodeynly / wel taken keepe
 Vp on a thyng' ne seen it parfitly
 Til þat he be / adawed verraily 2400
 ¶ Right so a man / þat longe hath blynd ybe
 Ne may nat sodeynly / so wel yse
 ffirst' whan his sighte / is newe come ageyn
 As he þat hath / a day or two yseyn 2404
 Til that youre sighte / ysatled be a while
 Ther may / ful many a sighte yow bigile
 Betw̄ war I prey yow / for by heuene kyng'
 [leaf 119]
 fful many a man / weneth to seen a thyng' 2408
 And it is / al another / than it semeth
 He þat mysconceyueth / he mysdemeth
 And with that word / she leepe doun fro the tree
 ¶ This Ianuarie / who is glad but he 2412
 He kisseth hire / and clippeth hire ful ofte
 And on hire wombe / he stroketh hire ful softe
 And to his palays / hoom he hath hire lad
 Now goode men / I pray yow be glad 2416
 Thus endeth heere / my tale of Ianuarie
 God blesse vs / and his mooder Seinte Marie 2418
 ¶ Heere is ended / the Mārchantes tale of Ianuarie 𐀀

¶ The Prologe of the Squieres tale  [on leaf 119]

Ey goddes mercy / seyde oure Hoost tho
 Now swich a wyf/ I pray god kepe me fro 2420
 Lo whiche sleightes / and subtiltees
 In wommen been / for ay as bisy as bees
 Been they / vs sely men for to deceyue
 And from a sooth / euere wol they weyue 2424
 By this Marchauntes tale / it preueth weel
 But doutelees / as trewe as any steel
 I haue a wyf/ though þat she poure be
 But of hir tonge / a labbyng^r shrewe is she 2428
 And yet she hath / an heepe of vices mo
 Ther-of no fors / lat alle swiche thynges go
 But wyte ye what^r in conseil be it seyde
 Me reweth soore / I am vn-to hire teyde 2432
 ffor and I sholde / rekenen euery vice
 Which þat she hath / ywis I were to nyce
 And cause why / it sholde reported be
 And toold to hire / of somme of this meynee 2436
 Of whom / it nedeth nat^r for to declare
 Syn wommen / konnen ouden swich chaffare
 And eek my wit^r suffiseth nat ther to
 To tellen al / wherfore my tale is do 2440

[No break in the MS.]

SIDE-NOTES TO THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 445, l. 1311. ¶ *Vxor est diligenda quia donum dei est || Ihesus filius sirac/ domus & diuicie dantur a parentibus / a domino autem proprie vxor bona vel prudens.* [MS, leaf 107, back.]

p. 445, l. 1327. ¶ *ffaciamus ei adiutorium & extracta costa de corpore Ade fecit Euam & dixit / propter hec/ relinquet homo patrem & matrem & adherabit &cetera et erunt duo in carne vna.* [MS, leaf 107, back.]

p. 446, l. 1362. *Iacob || per consilium matris sue Rebecce &cetera.* [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1366. *Iudith / de manibus Oloferni &cetera.* [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1369. *Abigayl / per suum bonum consilium virum suum Nabal ab ira dauid liberauit.* [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1371. *Ester & cetèra Iudeos per bonum consilium simul cum Mardocheo in regno Assueri.* [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1375. ¶ *Seneca / sicut nichil est benigna coniuge/ ita nichil crudelius est infesta muliere.* [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1377. ¶ *Cato / vxoris linguam si frugi est/ ferre memento.* [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 446, l. 1380. ¶ *Bona mulier fidelis custos est/ & bona domus.* [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 447, l. 1383. ¶ *Apostolus Paulus ad Ephesianos / diligite vxores vestras sicut christus dilexit ecclesiam &cetera.* [MS, leaf 108.]

p. 447, l. 1385. ¶ *Apostolus. Ita viri debent diligere vxores suas vt corpora sua / quia qui suam vxorem diligit/ seipsum diligit/ nemo vnquam carnem suam odio habuit/ set nutrit & fouet eam / et postea / vnusquisque suam vxorem sicut ipsum diligit.* [MS, leaf 108.]


GROUP F. FRAGMENT VII.

§ 1. THE SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMERE MS.

¶ Squier come neer / if it youre wille be	[on leaf 119]
And sey somewhat of loue / for certes ye ^s	
Konnen ther on / as muche as any man	
¶ Nay sire quod he / but I wol seye as I kan	4
With hertly wyl / for I wol nat rebelle	
Agayn youre lust ^s a tale wol I telle	
Haue me excused / if I speke amys	[leaf 119, back]
My wyl is good / and lo my tale is this	8

[Painting of the Squire on Horseback.]

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Squieres tale 
[on leaf 119, back]

AT Sarray / in the land of Tartarye
 Ther dwelte a kyng^t that werreyed Russye
 Thurg^h which ther dyde / many a doughty man
 This noble kyng^t was cleped Cambynskan¹
 Which in his tyme / was of so greet renoun ^{[MS more like Cam-}
 byuskan all through]
 That ther was / no wher in no Regioun
 So excellent a lord / in alle thyng^t
 Hym lakked noght^t that longeth to a kyng^t 16
 And of the secte / of which þat he was born
 He kepte his lay / to which þat he was sworn
 And ther to / he was hardy / wys and riche
 And pitous and Iust^t alwey yliche 20
 Sooth of his word / benigne and honourable
 Of his corage / as any Centre stable ¶ Centrum circuli
 Yong^t fress^h / strong^t and in Armes desirous
 As any Bachelor / of al his hous 24
 A fair persone he was / and fortunat^t
 And kepte alwey / so wel roial estat^t
 That ther was nowher / swich another man
 ¶ This noble kyng^t this Tartre Cambynskan 28
 Hadde two sones / on Elpheta his wyf
 Of whiche / the eldeste high^te Algarsyf^t
 That oother sone / was cleped Cambalo
 A doghter hadde / this worthy kyng also 32
 That yongest^t was / and high^te Canacee
 But for to telle yow / al hir beautee
 It lyth nat in my tonge / nyn my konnyng^t
 I dar nat^t vndertake / so heigh^t a thyng^t 36

Myn englissĥ eek' is insufficient'
 I moste been / a Rethor excellent'
 That koude hise colours / longynge for that Art'
 If he / sholde hire discryuen euery part' 40
 I am noon swich / I moot speke as I kan
 ¶ And so bifel / that whan this Cambynskan
 Hath twenty wynter / born his diademe
 As he was wont' fro yeer to yeer I deme 44
 He leet' the feeste / of his Natiuitee
 Doon cryen / thurgh Sarray his Citee
 The last Idus of March' / after the yeer
 Phebus the sonne / ful ioly was and cleer 48
 ffor he was / neigh his exaltacioñ
 In Martes face / and in his mansioñ
 In Aries / the colerik/ hooete signe [leaf 120]
 fful lusty was / the weder and benigne 52
 ffor which the foweles / agayn the sonne sheene
 What for the sesoñ / and the yonge grene
 fful loude / songen hire affeccioñs
 Hem semed / han geten hem proteccioñs 56
 Agayn the swerd of wynter/ keene and coold'
 ¶ This Cambynskan / of which I haue yow toold'
 In roial vestiment' sit on his deys
 With diademe / ful heighe in his paleys 60
 And halt his feeste so solempne / and so ryche
 That in this world / was ther noon it lyche
 Of which / if I shal tellen al tharray
 Thanne wolde it' occupie a someres day 64
 And eek/ it nedeth nat' for to deuyse
 At euery cours / the ordre of hire seruyse
 I wol nat tellen / of hir strange sewes
 Ne of hir swannes / nor of hire heronsewes 68
 Eck/ in that lond / as tellen knyghtes olde
 Ther is som mete / þat is ful deynte holde
 That in this lond / men recche of it but smal
 Ther nys no man / that may reporten al 72

¶ I wol nat taryen yow / for it is pryme And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme Vn to my firste / I wole haue my recours	
¶ And so bifol / that after the thridde cours Whil þat this kyng sit thus in his nobleye Herknyng hise Mynstrals / hir thynges pleyo Biforn hym at the bord / deliciously In at the halle dore / al sodeynly	76 80
Ther cam a knyght vp on a steede of bras And in his hand / a brood Mirour of glas Vpon his thombe / he hadde of gold a ryng / And by his syde / a naked swerd hangyng And vp he rideth / to the heighe bord In al the halle / ne was ther spoken a word ffor merueille of this knyght hym to biholde fful bisily / ther wayten yonge and olde	84 88
¶ This strange knyght that cam thus sodeynly Al armed / saue his heed / ful richely Saleweth kyng and queene / and lordes alle By ordre / as they seten in the halle With so heigh reuerence / and obeisañce As wel in speche / as in contenañce That Gawayn / with his olde curteisye Though he were / comen ayeyn out of ffairye Ne koude hym nat amende with a word And after this / biforn the heighe bord He with a manly voys / seith his message	92 96
After the forme / vsed in his langage With outen vice / of silable / or of lettre And for his tale / sholde seme the bettre Accordant to hise wordes / was his cheere As techeth art of speche / hem þat it leere Al be / that I kan nat sowne his stile Ne kan nat clymben / ouer so heigh a stile Yet seye I this / as to commune entente Thus muche amounteth / al þat euere he mente	[leaf 120, back] 100 104 108

If it so be / þat I haue it in mynde
 ¶ He seyde / the kyng of Arabe and of Inde
 My lige lord / on this solempne day
 Saleweth yow / as he best kan and may 112
 And sendeth yow / in honour of youre feeste
 By me / that am al redy at youre heeste
 This steede of bras / that esily and weel ¶ Of the vertu/ of the
 Kan in the space / of o day natured steede of bras 116
 This is to seyn / in foure and twenty houres
 Wher so yow lyst' in droghte or elles shoures
 Beren youre body / in to euery place
 To which youre herte / wilneth for to pace 120
 With outen wem of yow / thurgh foul or fair
 Or if yow lyst' to fleen / as hye in the Air
 As dooth an Egle / whan þat hym list to soore
 This same steede / shal bere yow euere moore 124
 With outen harm / til ye be ther yow leste
 Though that ye slepen / on his bak or reste
 And turne ayeyn / with writhyng' of a pyn
 He þat it wroghte / koude ful many a gyn 128
 He wayted / many a constellacion
 Er he / had doon / this operacion
 And knew ful many a seel / and many a bond
 ¶ This mirroure eek / þat I haue in myn hond' ¶ Of the vertu
 Hath swich a myght/ þat men may in it see of the Mirour
 Whan ther shal fallen / any Aduersitee
 Vn to youre regne / or to youre self also
 And openly / who is youre freend or foo 136
 ¶ And ouer al this / if any lady bright'
 Hath set hire herte / in any maner. wight'
 If he be fals / she shal his treson see
 His newe loue / and al his subtiltee 140
 So openly / þat ther shal no thyng hyde
 Wherfore / ageyn this lusty someres tyde
 This Mirour/ and this ryng' þat ye may see
 He hath sent' vn to my lady Canacee 144

Youre excellente doghter/ that is heere	^{his}	
¶ The vertu of the ryng ^t if ye wol heere	^{audir}	¶ Of the vertu of the ryng/
Is this / that if hire lust ^t it for to were		[leaf 121]
Vp on hir thombe / or in hir purs it bere		148
Ther is no fowel / þat fleeth vnder the heuene		
That she / ne shal / wel vnderstonde his steuene		
And knowe his menyng ^t openly and pleyn		
And answeere hym / in his langage ageyn		152
And every gras / that groweth vp on roote		
She shal eek knowe / and whom it wol do boote		
Al be hise woundes / neuer so depe and wyde		
¶ This naked swerd ^t / þat hangeth by my syde		¶ Of the vertu of the swerde
Swich vertu hath / þat what man so ye smyte		
Thurgh ^t out his Armure / it wole hym kerue and byte		
Were it as thikke / as is a branched ook ^t		
And what man / that is wounded with a strook ^t		160
Shal neuer be hool / til þat yow list of grace		
To stroke hym with the plat ^t in that place		
Ther he is hurt ^t / this is as muche to seyn		
Ye moote / with the plat swerd ageyn		164
Strike hym in the wounde / and it wol close		
This is a verray sooth / with outen glose		
It failleth nat ^t whils it is in youre hool ^t		
¶ And whan this knygh ^t hath thus his tale tool ^t		168
He rideth out of halle / and doun he lighte		
His steede / which þat shoon / as sonne brighte		
Stant in the court ^t stille as any stoon		
This knygh ^t is to his chambre lad anoon		172
And is vnarmed / and vn to mete yset ^t		
¶ The presentes / been / ful roially yfet ^t		
This is to seyn / the swerd and the Mirour		
And born anon / in to the heighe Tour		176
With certeine officers / ordeyned therfore		
And vn to Canacee / this ryng ^t was bore		
Solempnely / ther she sit/ at the table		
But sikerly / with outen any fable		180

The hors of bras / þat may nat be remewed It stant ^t as it were / to the ground yglewek ^t Ther may no man / out of the place it dryue ffor noon engyn / of wyndas ne polyue	184
And cause why ^s / for they kan nat the craft ^t And therefore / in the place / they han it ^t laft ^t Til þat the knyght ^t hath taught hem the manere To voyden hym / as ye shal after heere	188
G reet was the prees / þat swarmeth to and fro To gauren on this hors / that stondesth so ffor it so heigh was / and so brood and long ^t So wel proporeioned / for to been strong ^t	192
Right ^t as it were / a steede of Lumbardy Ther-with so horsly / and so quyk of eye As it a gentil Poilleys Courser were	[leaf 121, back]
ffor certes / fro his tayl / vn to his ere Nature ne Art ^t ne koude hym nat amende In no degree / as al the peple wende But euere Moore / hir mooste wonder was	196
How þat it koude go / and was of bras It was a ffairye / as al the peple semed Diuerse folk / diuersely they demed As many heddes / as manye wittes ther been	200
They murmureden / as dooth a swarm of Been And maden skiles / after hir fantasies Rehersynge / of thise olde poetries	204
And seyde / that it was lyk the Pegasee	¶ i. equus Pegasens
The hors / þat hadde wynges for to flece Or elles / it was the Grekes hors Synon ^t That broghte Troie to destruccion ^t As men / in thise olde geestes rede	208
¶ Myn herte quod oon / is euere Moore in drede I trowe / som men of Armes been ther Inne That shapen hem / this Citee for to wynne It were right good / þat al swich thyng were knowe	212
¶ Another rowned / to his felawe lowe	216

And seyde he lyeth / it is rather lyk'
 An apparence / ymaad by som Magyk'
 As Iogelours pleyen / at thise feestes grete
 Of sondry doutes / thus they Iangle *and* trete 220
 As lewed peple / demeth comunly
 Of thynges / þat been maad / moore subtilly
 Than they kan / in hir lewednesse *compre*hende
 They demen gladly / to the badder ende 224
 ¶ And *somme* of hem / wondred on the Mirour
 That born was vp / in to the hye tour .
 Hou men myghte in it / swiche thynges se
 ¶ Another answerde / and seyde it myghte wel be 228
 Naturelly / by composicioñs
 Of Anglis / and of slye reflexioñs
 And seyden / þat in Rome was swich oon
 They speken / of Alocen and Vitulon 232
 And Aristotle / that writen in hir lyues
 Of queynte Mirours / and of *prospectiues*
 As knowen they / that han hir bookes herd'
 ¶ And oother folk' han wondred on the swerd' 236
 That wolde *percen* / thurgh out euery thyng'
 And fille in speche / of Thelophus the kyng'
 And of Achilles / with his queynte spere
 ffor he koude with it' bothe heele and dere 240
 Right in swich wise / as men may *with* the swerd'
 Of which right now / ye han youre seluen herd'
 They speken / of sondry hardyng' of metal [leaf 122]
 And speke of medicynes / ther with al 244
 And how and whanne / it sholde yharded be
 Which is vnknowe / algates vnto me
 ¶ Tho speeke they / of Canacees ryng'
 And seyden alle / þat swich a wonder thyng' 248
 Of craft' of rynges / herde they neuere noon
 Saue þat he Moyses / and kyng' Salomon
 Hadde a name of konnyng' in swich Art'
 Thus seyn the peple / and drawn hem apart' 252

- ¶ But natheloes / somme seiden þat it was
 Wonder/ to maken / of fern Asshen glas
 And yet nys glas / nat lyk' Asshen of fern
 But for they han / knowen it so fern 256
 Therefore / cesseth / hir Ianglyng' and hir wonder
- ¶ As soore wondren somme / on cause of thonder
 On ebbe / on flood / on gossomer / and on myst'
 And on alle thyng' til þat the cause is wyst' 260
 Thus Iangle they / and demen and deuyse
 Til þat the kyng' gan fro the bord aryse
- P**hebus / hath laft' the Angle meridional
 And yet ascendynge / was the beest' roial 264
 The gentil leon' / with his Aldrian [aldiran later]
- Whan þat this Tartre kyng' Cambynskan
 Roos fro his bord / ther that he sat ful hye
 To forn hym gooth / the loude Mynstralcye 268
 Til he cam / to his chambre of parentz
 Ther as they sownen / diuerse Instrumentz
 That it is / lyk an heuene for to heere
 Now dauncen / lusty Venus children deere 272
 ffor in the fyssh / hir lady sat ful hye
 And looketh on hem / with a frendly eye
- ¶ This noble kyng' is set vp in his Trone
 This strange knyght' is fet to hym ful soone 276
 And on the daunce / he gooth with Canaceo
 Heere is the reuel / and the Iolitee
 That is nat able / a dul man to deuyse
 He moste han knowen / loue and his scruyse 280
 And been a feestlych man / as fressh as May
 That sholde yow / deuysen swich array
- ¶ Who koude telle yow / the forme of daunces
 So vnkouthe / and so fresshe contenaunces 284
 Swich subtil lookyng' and dissymulynges
 ffor drede / of Ialouse mennes aperceuynges ?
 No man but launcelet' and he is deed
 Therefore I passe / of al this lustiheed' 288

I sey namoore / but in this Iolynesse
 I lete hem / til men to the soper dresse
 ¶ The Styward bit' Spices for to hye [leaf 122, back]
 And eek the wyn / in al this melodye 292
 The vsshers / and the squiers been ygoon
 The spices and the wyn is come anoon
 They ete and drynke / and whan this hadde an ende
 Vn to the temple / as reson was they wende 296
 ¶ The seruice doon / they soupen al by day
 What nedeth me / rehercen hire array
 Ech man woot wel / þat a kynges feeste
 Hath plentee / to the mooste and to the leeste 300
 And deyntees / mo / than been in my knowyng'
 At after soper / gooth this noble kyng'
 To seen this hors of bras / with al the route
 Of lordes / and of ladyes hym aboute 304
 ¶ Swich wondryng' was ther on this hors of bras
 That syn the grete sege / of Troie was
 Ther as men wondreden / on an hors also
 Ne was ther swich a wondryng' as was tho 308
 But fynally / the kyng' axeth this knyght'
 The vertu of this Courser / and the myght'
 And preyde hym / to telle his gouernaunce
 ¶ This hors anoon / bigan to trippe and daunce 312
 Whan that this knyght' leyde hand vp on his reyne
 And seyde sire / ther is namoore to seyne
 But whan yow list' to ryden any where
 Ye mooten trille a pyn / stant in his ere 316
 Which I shal yow telle / bitwix vs two
 Ye moote nempne hym / to what place also
 Or to what contree / þat yow list to ryde
 And whan ye come / ther as yow list abyde 320
 Bidde hym descende / and trille another pyn
 ffor ther lith / theffect' of al the gyn
 And he wol down descende / and doon youre wille
 And in that place / he wol stonde stille 324

Though al the world / the contrarie hadde yswore
 He shal nat thennes / been ydrawe nor ybore
 Or if yow list' bidde hym thennes goon
 Trille this pyn / and he wol varysshe anoon 328
 Out of the sighte / of euery maner wight'
 And come agayn / be it day or nyght'
 Whan þat yow list' to clepen hym ageyn
 In swich a gyse / as I shal to yow seyn 332
 Bitwixe yow and me / and that ful soone
 Ride whan yow list' ther is namoore to doone
 ¶ Enformed / whan the kyng was / of that knyght'
 And hath conceyued / in his wit aright' 336
 The manere / and the forme / of al this thyng'
 Thus glad and blithe / this noble kyng'
 Repeireth to his reuel / as biforn [leaf 123]
 ¶ The brydel / is / vn to the tour yborn 340
 And kept among hise Iueles / leeuē and deere
 The hors varysshed I noot / in what manere
 Out of hir sighte / ye gete namoore of me
 But thus I lete / in lust' and Iolitee 344
 This Cambynskan / hise lordes festeiynge
 Til wel ny / the day bigan to sprynge
 ¶ Explicit prima pars 𐀀

¶ Sequitur pars secunda 𐀀

The Norice of digestioun / the sleepe
 Gan on hem wynke / and bad hem taken keepe
 That muchel drynke / and labour wolde han reste
 And with a galpyng' mouth / hem alle he keste
 And seyde / it was tyme to lye adoun
 ffor blood / was in his domynacioun 352
 Cherisseth blood / natures freend quod he
 They thanken hym galpynge / by two / by thre
 And euery wight' / gan drawe hym to his reste
 As sleepe hem bad / they tooke it for the besto 356

- ¶ Hire dremes / shul nat been ytoold for me
 fful were hire heddes / of fumositee
 That causeth dreem / of which ther nys no charge
 They slepen / til that it was pryme large 360
 The mooste part but it were Canacee
 She was ful mesurable / as wommen be
 ffor of hir fader / hadde she take leue
 To goon to reste / soone after it was eue 364
 Hir liste nat' appalled for to be
 Ne on the morwe / vnfeestlich for to se
 And slepte hire firste sleepe / and thanne awook/
 ffor swich a ioye / she in hir herte took 368
 Bothe of hir queynte ryng' and hire Mirour
 That twenty tyme / she changed hir colour
 And in hire sleepe / right for impressiõ
 Of hire Mirour / she hadde Avisiõ 372
 Wherefore / er þat the sonne gan vp glyde
 She cleped / on hir Maistresse / hire bisyde
 And seyde / that hire liste for to ryse
 ¶ These olde wommen / þat been gladly wyse 376
 As hire Maistresse / answerde hire anon
 And seyde madame / whider wil ye goon
 Thus erly / for the folk / been alle on reste
 ¶ I wol quod she arise / for me leste 380
 No lenger for to slepe / and walke aboute [leaf 123, back]
 ¶ Hire Maistresse / clepeth wommen / a greet route
 And vp they rysen / wel an ten / or twelue
 Vp riseth / fresshe Canacee / hir selue 384
 As rody and bright / as dooth the yonge sonne
 That in the Ram / is foure degrees vp ronne
 Noon hyer was he / whan she redy was
 And forth she walketh / esily a pas 388
 Arrayed / after the lusty seson soote
 Lightly for to pleye / and walke on foote
 Nat but with fyue or sixe / of hir meynee
 And in a trench / forth in the park' gooth she 392

- ¶ The vapour / which þat fro the erthe glood
 Made the sonne / to seme rody and brood
 But natheles / it was so fair a sighte
 That it made / alle hire hertes for to lighte 396
 What for the seson / and the morwenyng
 And for the foweles / that she herde syng
 ffor right anon / she wiste what they mente
 Right by hir song^t and knew al hire entente 400
 ¶ The knotte / why þat euey tale is toold^t
 If it be taried / til that lust be coold^t
 Of hem þat han / it after herkned yoor
 The sauour passeth / euer lenger the moore 404
 ffor fulsomnesse / of his prolixitee
 And by the same resoñ / thynketh me
 I sholde / to the knotte / condescende
 And maken of hir walkyng^t soone an ende 408
Amydde a tree / fordryed / as whit as chalk^t
 As Canacee / was pleyyng^t in hir walk^t
 Ther sat^t a ffaucon / ouer hire heed ful hye
 That with a pitous voys / so gan to crye 412
 That all the wode / resounded of hire cry
 Ybeten hath she hir self / so pitously
 With bothe hir wynges / til the rede blood
 Ran endelong the tree / ther she stood 416
 And euere in oon / she cryde alwey and shrigh^t
 And with hir beek / hir seluen so she prigh^t
 That ther nys Tygre / ne noon so cruuel beest^t
 That dwelleth / outh^r in wode or in fforest^t 420
 That nolde han wept^t if þat she wepe koude
 ffor sorwe of hire / she shrigh^t alwey so loude
 ffor ther nas neuere man / yet on lyue
 If þat I koude / a ffaucon wel discryue 424
 That herde of swich another of fairnesse
 As wel of plumage / as of gentillesse
 Of shape / and al that myghte yrekened be
 A ffaucon peregryn / thanne semed she 428

Of fremde Lande / and eueremoore as she stood [leaf 124]
 She swowneth now and now / for lakke of blood
 Til wel neigh / is she fallen fro the tree
 ¶ This faire kynges doghter Canacee 432
 That on hir fynger / baar the queynte ryng
 Thurgh which / she vnderstood wel euery thyng
 That any fowel / may in his leden seyn
 And koude answeren hym / in his ledene ageyn 436
 Hath vnderstonde / what this ffaucon seyde
 And wel neigh / for the routhe / almost she deyde
 And to the tree / she gooth ful hastily
 And on this ffaucon / looketh pitously 440
 And heeld hir lappe abrood / for wel she wiste
 The ffaucon / moste fallen fro the twiste
 Whan þat it swowned next for lakke of blood
 A longe while / to wayten hire she stood 444
 Til atte laste / she spak in this manere
 Vn to the hauk as ye shal after heere
 ¶ What is the cause / if it be for to telle
 That ye be / in this furial pyne of helle 448
 Quod Canacee / vn to the hauk / aboue
 Is this for sorwe of deeth / or los of loue
 ffor as I trowe / thise been causes two
 That causeth moost a gentil herte wo 452
 Of oother harm / it nedeth nat to speke
 ffor ye youre self / vpon your self yow wreke
 Which proueth wel / that outhere loue or drede
 Moot been encheson / of youre cruel dede 456
 Syn þat I see / noon oother wight yow chace
 ffor loue of god / as dooth youre seluen grace
 Or what may been youre helpe / for West nor Est
 Ne saugh I neuere er now / no bryd ne beest 460
 That ferde with hym self / so pitously
 Ye sle me with youre sorwe verrailly
 I haue of yow / so greet passioun
 ffor goddes loue / com fro the tree adoun 464

And as I am / a kynges doghter trewe
 If þat I verrailly / the cause knewe
 Of youre disese / if it lay in my mygh't
 I wolde amenden it' er þat it were nygh't 468
 As wisly helpe me / the grete god of kynde
 And herbes / shal I right ynowe yfynde
 To heele with / youre hurtes hastily
 ¶ Tho shrigh'te this ffaucōn / moore yet pitously 472
 Than euer she dide / and fil to grounde anon
 And lith aswowne deed / and lyk a stoon
 Til Canacee / hath in hire lappe hire take
 Vn to the tyme / she gan of swough awake 476
 ¶ And after that' she of hir swough gan breyde [leaf 124, back]
 Right in hir haukes ledene / thus she seyde
 That pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
 ffeelynge his similitude / in peynes smerte 480
 Is preued al day / as men may see
 As wel by werk' as by Auctoritee
 ffor gentil-herte / kitheth gentillesse
 I se wel / ye han of my distresse 484
 Compassion' / my faire Canacee
 Of verrey wommanly benignytee
 That nature / in youre principles hath yset'
 But for noon hope / for to fare the bet' 488
 But for obeye / vn to youre herte free
 And for to maken othere / be war by me
 As by the whelpe / chasted is the leon'
 Right for that cause / and for that conclusion' 492
 Whil þat I haue / a leyser and a space
 Myn harm / I wol confessen er I pace
 ¶ And euere / whil þat oon hir sorwe tolde
 That oother weepe / as she to water wolde 496
 Til that the ffaucōn / bad hire to be stille
 And with a syk' / right thus she seyde hir wille
 ¶ That I was bred / allas that harde day
 And fostred in a Roche / of Marbul gray 500

So tendrely / that no thyng eyled me
 I nyste nat' what was Aduersitee
 Til I koude flee ful hye / vnder the sky
 Tho dwelte / a Tercelet' me faste by 504
 That semed welle / of alle gentillesse
 Al were he ful of treson / and falsnesse
 It was so wrapped / vnder humble cheere
 And vnder hewe of trouthe / in swich manere 508
 Vnder plesance / and vnder bisy peyne
 That I ne koude han wend' / he koude feyne
 So depe in greyn / he dyed his colours
 Right as a serpent' hit hym vnder floures 512
 Til he may seen / his tyme / for to byte
 Right so this god of loue / this ypocryte
 Dooth so hise cerymonyes and obeisañces
 And kepeth in semblant' alle hise obseruañces 516
 That sowneth / in to gentillesse of loue
 As in a tounge / is al the faire aboute
 And vnder is the corps / swich as ye woot'
 Swich was the ypocrite / bothe coold and hoot' 520
 And in this wise / he serued his entente
 That saue the feend / noon wiste what he mente
 Til he so longe / hadde wopen and compleyned'
 And many a yeer / his seruice to me feyned' 524
 Til that myn herte / to pitous and to nyce [leaf 125]
 Al Innocent' of his coroune malice
 ffor-ferd of his deeth / as thoughte me
 Vpon hise othes / and his seuretee 528
 Graunted hym loue / vp on this condicioun
 That euermoore / myn honour and renoun
 Were saued / bothe priuee and apert'
 This is to seyn / that after his desert' 532
 I yaf hym al myn herte / and my thogh't
 God woot and he / pat ootherwise noght'
 And took his herte / in change for myn for ay
 But sooth is seyde / goon sithen many a day 536

A trewe wight and a theef^t thenken nat oon
 And whan he saugh / the thyng so fer ygoon
 That I hadde graunted hym / fully my loue
 In swich a gyse / as I haue seyde aboute 540
 And yeuen hym / my trewe herte as free
 As he swoor / he gaf his herte to me
 Anon this Tigre / ful of doublenesse
 ffil on hise knees / with so deuout humblesse 544
 With so heigh reuerence / and as by his cheere
 So lyk^t a gentil louere / of manere
 So rauysshed / as it semed for the Ioye
 That neuere Troilus / ne Parys of Troye 548
 Iason certes / ne noon oother man
 Syn Lameth was / þat alderfirst bigan
 To louen two / as writen folk biforn
 Ne neuere / syn the firste man was born 552
 Ne koude man / by twenty thousand part^t
 Countrefete / the Sophymes of his Art^t
 Ne were worthy / vnbokelen his galoche
 Ther doublenesse / or feynyng^t sholde approche 556
 Ne so koude thanke a wight / as he dide me
 His manere / was an heuene for to see
 Til any womman / were she neuer so wys
 So peynted he / and kembde at point deys 560
 As wel hise wordes / as his contenañce
 And I loued hym / for his obeisañce
 And for the trouthe / I demed in his herte
 That if so were / that any thyng hym smerte 564
 Al were it neuer so lite / and I it wiste
 Me thoughte / I felte deeth myn herte twiste
 And shortly / so ferforth / this thyng is went^t
 That my wyl / was his willes Instrument^t 568
 This is to seyn / my wyl obeyed his wyl
 In alle thyng^t as fer as reson^t fil
 Kepyng^e the boundes / of my worshipe euere
 Ne neuere hadde I thyng^t so lief ne leuere 572

As hym god woot ne neuere shal namo [leaf 125, back]
 This lasteth lenger/ than a yeer or two
 That I supposed of hym / noght but good
 But finally / thus atte laste it stood 576
 That fortune wolde / þat he moste twynne
 Out of that place / which þat I was inne
 Wher me was wo / that is no questioñ
 I kan nat' make of it discripsioñ 580
 ffor o thyng dare I tellen boldely
 I knowe / what is the peyne of deeth ther by
 Swich harme I felte / for I ne mygh̄te bileue
 So on a day / of me he took his leue 584
 So sorwefully eek' that I wende verrailly
 That he had felt' as mucche harm as I
 Whan þat I herde hym speke / and saugh his hewe
 But natheles / I thoughte / he was so trewe 588
 And eek' þat he / repaire sholde ageyn
 With inne a litel while / sooth to seyn
 And resoñ wolde eek' that he moste go
 ffor his honour / as ofte it happeth so 592
 That I made vertu / of necessitee
 And took it wel / syn þat it moste be
 As I best mygh̄te / I hidde fro hym my sorwe
 And took hym by the hond / seint Iohn to borwe 596
 And seyde hym thus / lo I am youres al
 Beth swich / as I to yow / haue been and shal
 What he answerde / it nedeth noght reherce
 Who kan sey bet than he / who kan do werse 600
 Whan he hath al seyde / thanne hath he doon
 Therefore bihoueth hire / a ful long spoon
 That shal ete with a feend' / thus herde I seye
 So atte laste / he moste forth his weye 604
 And forth he fleeth / til he cam ther hym leste
 Whan it cam / hym to purpos / for to reste
 I trowe / he hadde / thilke text in mynde
 That alle thyng' repeyringe to his kynde 608

Gladeth hym self^t thus seyn men as I gesse ¶ Reditu suo singula
 Men louen of propre kynde newefangelnesse
 As briddes doon / that men in cages fede
 ffor though thou nyght *and* day / take of hem hede 612
 And strawe hir Cage / faire and softe as silk^t
 And yeue hem sugre / hony / breed and Milk^t
 Yet right anon / as that his dore is vppe
 He *with* his feet^t wol spurne adoun his cuppe 616
 And to the wode he wole and wormes ete
 So newefangel / been they of hire mete
 And louen nouelrie / of propre kynde
 No gentillesse of blood / may hem bynde 620
 ¶ So ferde this Tercelet^t allas the day [leaf 126]
 Though he were gentil born / fressh and gay
 And goodlich for to seen / humble and free
 He saugh vp on a tyme a kyte flee 624
 And sodeynly / he loued this kyte so
 That al his loue / is clene fro me ago
 And hath his trouthe / falsed in this wyse
 Thus hath the kyte / my loue in hire *seruyse* 628
 And I am lorn / with outen remedie
 And with that word^t / this ffaucon gan to crie
 And swowned eft/ in Canacees barm
 ¶ Greet was the sorve / for the haukes harm 632
 That Canacee / and alle hir wommen made
 They nyste / hou they myghte the ffaucon glade
 But Canacee / hom bereth hire in hir lappe
 And softly / in plastres gan hire wrappe 636
 Ther as she / with hire beek hadde hurt hir selue
 Now kan nat Canacee / but herbes delue
 Out of the ground / and make saues newe
 Of herbes precieuse / and fyne of hewe 640
 To heelen with this [hawk] / fro day to nyght^t
 She dooth hire bisynesse / and hire fulle myght^t
 And by hire beddes heed / she made a Mewe
 And couered it^t with veluettes blewe 644



In signe of trouthe / that is in wommen sene
 And al *with* oute the Mewe / is peynted grene
 In which ther were ypeynted / alle thise false fowles
 As both thise tidyues / tercelettes and Owles 648
 Right for despit' were peynted hem bisyde
 And pyes on hem / for to crie and chyde
 ¶ Thus lete I Canacee / hir hauk kepyng'
 I wol namoore as now / speke of hir ryng' 652
 Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
 How that this ffaucon / gat hire loue ageyn
 Repentant' as the storie telleth vs
 By mediacion of Cambalus 656
 The kynges sone / of which I yow tolde
 But hennes forth / I wol my proces holde
 To speken of auentures / and of batailles
 That neuere yet' was herd / so grete meruailles 660
 ¶ first wol I telle yow / of Cambynskan
 That in his tyme / many a Citee wan
 And after wol I speke of Algarsif'
 How that he wan Theodera to his wif 664
 ffor whom ful ofte / in greet peril he was
 Ne hadde he be holpen / by the steede of bras
 And after / wol I speke of Cambalo
 That faught in lystes / *with* the bretheren two 668
 For Canacee / er that he myghte hire wynne [leaf 126, back]
 An ther I lefte / I wol ayeyn bigynne

¶ Explicit secunda pars 𐀀

¶ Incipit pars tercia 𐀀

Appollo whirleth vp / his Chaar so hye
 Til that the god / Mercurius hous the slye 672

[*Rest of the page blank*]

¶ Heere folwen the wordes of the frankelyn [leaf 127
to the Squier  and the wordes of the hoost^t to the
frankelyn 

IN feith Squier / thow hast thee wel yquit^t
And gentilly / I preise wel thy wit^t
Quod the frankleyn / considerynge thy yowthe
So feelyngly thou spekest^t sire I allowethe 676
As to my doom / ther is noon that is heere
Of eloquence / that shal be thy peere
If that thou lyue / god yeue thee good chaunce
And in vertu / sende thee continuaunce 680
ffor of thy speche / I haue greet deyntee
I haue a sone / and by the Trinitee
I hadde leuere / than twenty pound worth lond^t
Though it right now / were fallen in myn hond^t 684
He were a man / of swich discrecion
As that ye been / fy on possession
But if a man / be vertuous with al
I haue my sone snybbed / and yet shal 688
ffor he to vertu / listneth nat entende
But for to pleye at dees / and to despende
And lese al that he hath / is his vsage
And he hath leuere / talken with a page 692
Than to comune / with any gentil wight^t
There he myghte lerne gentillesse aright/
¶ Straw for youre gentillesse / quod our hoost^t
What frankleyn / pardee sire wel thou woost^t 696
That ech of yow / moot tellen atte leste
A tale or two / or breken his biheste
¶ That knowe I wel sire / quod the frankleyn
I prey yow / haueth me nat in desdeyn 700

Though to this man I speke ¹a word¹ or two [—¹ in margin]

¶ Telle on thy tale / with outen wordes mo

¶ Gladly sire hoost^t quod he / I wole obeye

Vn to your wyl / now herkneth what I seye 704

I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse

As fer / as that my wittes / wol suffyse

I prey to god / that it may plesen yow

Thanne woot I wel / that it is good ynow 708

¶ Explicit 𐀀

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 519, l. 1387. ¶ Aristocles Orcomeni tyrannus adamavit virginem stymphalidem que cum patre occiso ad templum diane & cetera. [MS, leaf 134, back.]

p. 519, l. 1399. ¶ Nam hasdrubalis vxor capta & incensa vrbe cum se cerneret a Romanis capienda & cetera. [MS, lf 134, bk.]

p. 519, l. 1405. ¶ primo ponam lucreciam / que violat pudicie nolens superuivere maculam corporis cruore deleuit / [MS, leaf 134, back.]

p. 519, l. 1409. ¶ Quis valet silencio preterire vij. Milesias virgines que Gallorum & cetera. [MS, leaf 134, back.]

p. 519, l. 1414. ¶ Senapho in Ciri maioris scribit / infancia occiso Habradate & cetera. [MS, leaf 134, back.]

p. 520, l. 1426. ¶ Democionis Ariopagitarum principis virgo filia & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1431. ¶ Nichanor victis Thebis vnus captiue virginis superatus est. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1434. ¶ Narrant scriptores Grecie & aliam Thebanam virginem & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1437. ¶ Quid loquar Nicerati coniugem pie impaciens iniurie viri mortem & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1442. Alcesten fabule ferunt pro marito Adameto sponte defunctam / et Penolopes pudicia Omeri carmen est [?]. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1445. ¶ Lacedomia quoque poetarum ore cantatur occiso apud Troiam Protheselao & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 520, l. 1451. Arthemisia quoque vxor Mauseoli insignis pudicij fuisse prohibetur & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 521, l. 1453. Teuta / Illicorum Regina & cetera. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 521, l. 1455. ¶ Memorandum strato regulus. ¶ Vidi & omnes pene Barbares capitulo .xxvj°. primi. ¶ Item Cornelia & cetera. ¶ Imitentur g° nupte Theanam / Cleobiliam / Gorgim¹ / Thymodiam / Claudias atque Cornelias / in fine libri primi. [MS, leaf 135.]

p. 521, l. 1465. ¶ Singulas has historias & plures hanc materiam concernentes recitat beatus Ieronimus contra Iouinianum in primo suq libro capitulo .39°. [MS, leaf 135.] [¹ or Gorgun.]

[THE PROEM.]

¶ The Prologe / of the ffrankeleyns tale  [leaf 127, bk]

THise olde gentil Britoñs / in hir dayes
 Of diuerse auentures / maden layes
 Rymeyd / in hir firste Briton tonge
 Whiche layes / with hir Instrumentz they songe 712
 Or elles reddden hem / for hir plesañce
 And oon of hem / haue I in remembrañce
 Which I shal seyn / with good wyl as I kan
 ¶ But sires / by cause I am a burel man 716
 At my bigynnyng^t first^t I yow biseche
 Haue me excused / of my rude speche
 I lerned neuere Rethorik certeyn
 Thyng þat I speke / it moot be bare and pleyn 720
 I sleepe neuere / on the Mount of Pernaso ¶ Vnde Persius ¶
 Ne lerned / Marcus Tullius Scithero fonte labra prolui
 Colours ne knowe I none with outen drede caballino / nec in
 But swiche colours / as growen in the Mede 724 bicipite parnaso me
 Or elles swiche / as men dye or peynte memini sompniasse.
 Colours of Rethoryk / been to queynte
 My spirit^t feeleth noght^t of swich mateere
 But if yow list^t my tale shul ye heere 728

¶ Heere bigynneth / the ffrankeleyns tale /

[Painting of the Franklin]

IN Armorik / that called is Britayne
 Ther was a knyght / þat loued and dide his payne
 To serue a lady / in his beste wise
 And many a labour / many a greet emprise 732

He for his lady wrogh̃te / er she were wonne
 ffor she was / oon the faireste vnder sonne
 And cek therto / comen of so heigh̃ kynrede
 That wel vnnethes / dorste this knyght for drede 736
 Telle hire his wo / his peyne / and his distresse
 But atte laste / she for his worthynesse
 And namely / for his meke obeysãnce
 Hath swich a pitee caught of his penãnce 740
 That pryuely / she fil of his accord̃
 To take hym / for hir housbonde and hir lord̃
 Of swich lordshipe / as men han ouer hir wyues
 And for to lede / the moore in blisse hir lyues 744
 Of his free wyl / he swoor hire as a knyght̃
 That neuere in al his lyf̃ he day ne nyght̃
 Ne sholde vp on hym / take no maistrie
 Agayn hir wyl / ne kithe hire Ialousie 748
 But hire obeye / and folwe hir wyl in al
 As any louere / to his lady shal
 Saue / that the name of soueraynetee
 That wolde he haue / for shame of his degree 752
 ¶ She thanked hym / and with ful greet humblesse
 She seyde sire / sith of youre gentillesse
 Ye profre me / to haue so large a reyne
 Ne wolde neuere god / bitwixe vs tweyne 756
 As in my gilt̃ were outhur werre or stryf/
 Sire / I wol be / youre humble trewe wyf̃
 Haue heer my trouthe / til þat myn herte breste
 Thus been they / bothe in quiete and in reste 760
 ¶ ffor o thyng sires / saully dar I seye
 That freendes / euerych oother moot obeye
 If they wol longe / holden compaignye
 Loue / wol nat been constreyned by maistrye 764
 Whan maistrie comth / the god of loue anon
 Beteth hise wynges / and farewel he is gon
 Loue is a thyng̃ as any Spirit free
 Wommen of kynde / desiren libertee 768

And nat/ to been constreyned as a thral
 And so doon men / if I sooth seyen shal
 Looke / who þat is moost pacient in loue
 He is / at his auantate al aboute 772
 Pacience / is an heigh vertu certeyn
 ffor it venquysseth / as thise clerkes seyn
 Thynges / þat rigour / sholde neuere atteyne 776
 ffor euery word / men may nat/ chide or pleyne
 Lerneth to suffre / or elles so moot I goon
 Ye shul it lerne / wher so ye wole or noon
 ffor in this world certein / ther no wight is
 That he ne dooth or seith / som tyme amys 780
 Ire / siknesse / or constellacioñ
 Wyn / wo / or chaungynge of complexioñ
 Causeth ful ofte / to doon amys or speken
 On euery wrong a man may nat be wreken 784
 After the tyme / moste be temperañce
 To euery wight þat kan on gouernañce
 And therefore / hath this wise worthy knyght
 To lyue in ese / suffrance hire bihight 788
 And she to hym / ful wisly gan to swere
 That neuere / sholde ther be defaute in here
 ¶ Heere may men seen / an humble wys accord
 Thus hath she take / hir seruant and hir lord 792
 Seruant in love / and lord in mariage
 Thanne was he / bothe in lordshipe and seruage
 Seruage ? nay / but in lordshipe aboute
 Sith he hath / bothe his lady and his loue 796
 His lady certes / and his wyf also [leaf 128, back]
 The which / þat lawe of loue acordeth to
 And whan he was / in this prosperitee
 Hoom with his wyf / he gooth to his contree 800
 Nat fer fro Pedmark/ ther his dwellyng was
 Where as he lyueth / in blisse and in solas
 ¶ Who koude telle / but he hadde wedded be
 The ioye / the ese / and the prosperitee 804

That is / bitwixe an housbonde / and his wyf
 A yeer and moore / lasted this blisful lyf
 Til þat the knyghit of which I speke of thus
 That of kayrrud / was cleped Arueragus 808
 Shoope hym to goon / and dwelle a yeer or tweyne
 In Engelond / that cleped was eek Briteyne
 To seke in Armes / worshiþe and honour
 ffor al his lust he sette in swich labour 812
 And dwelled there two yeer / the book seith thus
 ¶ Now wol I stynten / of this Arueragus
 And speken I wole / of Dorigene his wyf
 That loueth hire housbonde / as hire hertes lyf 816
 ffor his Absence / wepeth she and siketh
 As doon thise noble wyues / whan hem liketh
 She moorneth / waketh / wayleth / fasteth / pleyneþ
 Desir of his presence / hire so distreyneth 820
 That al this wyde world / she sette at noghit
 Hire freendes / whiche þat knewe hir heuy thoghit
 Conforten hire / in al þat euer they may
 They prechen hire / they telle hire nyght and day 824
 That causeles / she sleeth hir self'allas
 And euery confort' possible in this cas
 They doon to hire / with all hire bisynesse
 Al / for to make hire / leue hire heuynesse 828
 ¶ By proces / as ye knowen euerichoon
 Men may so longe / grauen in a stoon
 Til som figure / ther Inne emprented be
 So longe han they confortd hire / til she 832
 Receyued hath / by hope and by resoñ
 The emprentyng' of hire consolaciõ
 Thurgh which / hir grete sorwe gan aswage
 She may nat alwey / duren in swich rage 836
 ¶ And eek Arueragus / in al this care
 Hath sent hire lettres hoom / of his welfare
 And þat he wol come hastily agayn
 Or elles hadde this sorwe / hir herte slayn 840

- ¶ Hire freendes sawe / hir sorwe gan to slake
 And preyde hire on knees / for goddes sake
 To come / and romen hire in compaignye
 Awey to dryue / hire derke fantasye 844
 And finally / she graunted that requeste [leaf 129]
 ffor wel she saugh / that it was for the beste
- ¶ Now stood hire Castel / faste by the See
 And often / with hire freendes walketh shee 848
 Hire to disporte / vp on the bank an heigh
 Where / as she / many a shipe and barge seigh
 Scillynge hir cours / where as hem liste go
 But thanne was that a parcel of hire wo 852
 ffor to hir self ful ofte allas seith she
 Is ther no shipe / of so manye as I se
 Wol bryngen hom my lord / thanne were myn herte
 Al warished / of hise bittre peynes smerte 856
- ¶ Another tyme / ther wolde she sitte and thynke
 And caste hir eyen / downward fro the brynke
 But whan she saugh / the grisly Rokkes blake
 ffor verray feere / so wolde hir herte quake 860
 That on hire feet she myghite hire noght sustene
 Thanne wolde she / sitte adoun vpon the grene
 And pitously / in to the see biholde
 And seyn right thus / with sorweful sikes colde 864
- ¶ Eterne god / that thurgh thy purueiaunce
 Ledest the world / by certein gouernaunce
 In ydel as men seyn / ye no thyng make
 But lord / thise grisly / feendly Rokkes blake 868
 That semen rather / a foul confusion
 Of werk than any fair creacion
 Of swich a parfit wys god and a stable
 Why han ye wrought this werk vnresonable 872
 ffor by this werk / South / North / ne West ne East
 Ther nys yfostred / man / ne bryd ne beest
 It dooth no good to my wit but anyeth
 Se ye nat lord / how mankynde it destroyeth 876

An hundred thousand bodyes of mankynde
 Han Rokkes slayn / al be they nat in mynde
 Which mankynde / is so fair part' of thy werk'
 That thou it madest' lyk to thyn owene merk' 880
 ¶ Thanne semed it' ye hadde a greet chiertee
 Toward mankynde / but how thanne may it bee
 That ye swiche meenes make / it to destroyen
 Whiche meenes do no good / but euere anoyen 884
 I woot wel / clerkes wol seyn as hem leste
 By Argumentz / that al is for the beste
 Though I kan / the causes nat yknowe
 But thilke god / that made wynd to blowe 888
 As kepe my lord' / this my conclusion
 To clerkes lete I / al this disputison'
 But wolde god / that alle thise Rokkes blake
 Were sonken in to helle for his sake 892
 Thise Rokkes / sleen myn herte for the feere [leaf 129, back]
 Thus wolde she seyn / with many a pitous teere
 ¶ Hire freendes sawe / that it was no disport'
 To romen by the see / but discomfort' 896
 And shopen for to pleyen / somwher elles
 They leden hire / by Ryueres and by welles
 And eek / in othere places delitables'
 They dauncen / and they pleyen / at ches and tables 900
 ¶ So on a day / right in the morwe tyde
 Vn to a gardyn / that was ther bisyde
 In which / that they hadde maad hir ordinañce
 Of vitaille / and of oother purueiañce 904
 They goon and pleye hem / al the longe day
 And this was / in the sixte morwe of May
 Which May hadde peynted / with his softe shoures
 This gardyn / ful of leues and of floures 908
 And craft of mannes hand so curiously
 Arrayed hadde / this gardyn trewely
 That neuere / was ther gardyn of swich prys
 But if it were / the verray Paradys 912

The odour of floures / and the fresshe sighte
 Wolde han maked / any herte lighte
 That euere was born / but if to greet siknesse
 Or to greet sorwe / helde it in distresse 916
 So ful it was / of beautee with plesaunce
 At after dyner / gonne they to daunce
 And synge also / saue Dorigen allone
 Which made alwey / hir compleint *and* hir moone 920
 ffor she ne saugh hym / on the daunce go
 That was hir housbonde / and hir loue also
 But natheles / she moste a tyme abyde
 And with good hope / lete hir sorwe slyde 924
 ¶ Vp on this daunce / amonges othere men
 Daunced a squier / biforn Dorigen
 That fressher was / and Iolyer of array
 As to my doom / than is the Monthe of May 928
 He syngeth / daunceth / passynge any man
 That is // or was / sith þat the world bigan
 Ther-*with* he was / if men sholde hym discryue
 Oon / of the beste farynge man on lyue 932
 Yong / strong / right vertuous / and riche *and* wys
 And wel biloued / and holden in greet prys
 And shortly / if the sothe I tellen shal
 Vnwityng of this Dorigen at al 936
 This lusty Squier / seruant to Venus
 Which that ycleped was Aurelius
 Hadde loued hire / best of any creature
 Two yeer and moore / as was his auenture 940
 But neuere / dorste he tellen hire his greuaunce [leaf 130r]
 With outen coppe / he drank al his penaunce
 He was despeyred / no thyng dorste he seye
 Saue in his songes / somewhat wolde he wreye 944
 His wo / as in a general compleynyng
 He seyde he louede / and was biloued no thyng
 Of swich matere / made he many layes
 Songes / compleintes / roundels / virelayes 948

How that/ he dorste nat/ his sorwe telle
 But langwissñeth / as a furye dooth in helle
 And dye he moste he seyde / as dide Ekko ¶ Methamorphosios 5
 ffor Narcisus / that dorste nat telle hir wo 952
 In oother manere / than ye heere me seye
 Ne dorste he nat. to hire his wo biwreye
 Saue that parauenture / som tyme at daunces
 Ther yong folk/ kepen hir obseruaunces 956
 It may wel be / he looked on hir face
 In swich a wise / as man þat asketh grace
 But no thyng^e wiste she / of his entente
 Nathelees / it happed er they thennes wente 960
 By cause / that he was hire Neighebour
 And was a man / of worshiþe and honour
 And hadde yknowen hym / of tyme yoore
 They fille in speche / and forthe moore and moore 964
 Vn to this purpos / drough Aurelius
 And whan he saugh his tyme / he seyde thus
 ¶ Madame quod he / by god þat this world made
 So that I wiste / it myghte youre herte glade 968
 I wolde that day / that youre Arueragus
 Wente ouer the see / that I Aurelius
 Hadde went^e ther neuere I sholde haue come agayn
 ffor wel I woot^e my seruyce is in vayn 972
 My gerdon is / but brestyng of myn herte
 Madame / reweth vpon my peynes smerte
 ffor with a word / ye may me sleen or saue
 Heere at youre feet/ god wolde þat I were graue 976
 I ne haue as now / no leyser moore to seye
 Haue mercy sweete / or ye wol do me deye
 ¶ She gan to looke / vp on Aurelius
 Is this youre wyl quod she / and sey ye thus ? 980
 Neuere erst^e quod she / ne wiste I what ye mente
 But now Aurelie / I knowe youre entente
 By thilke god / that yaf me soule and lyf
 Ne shal I neuere / been vntrewe wyf 984

In word ne werk / as fer as I haue wit/
 I wol been his / to whom þat I am knyht
 Taak this for fynal answeere / as of me
 But after that in pley thus seyde she . 988
 ¶ Aurelie quod she / by heighe god aboue [leaf 130, back]
 Yet wolde I graunte yow / to been youre loue
 Syn I yow se / so pitously complayne
 Looke what day / that endelong Britayne 992
 Ye remoeue alle the Rokkes / stoon by stoon
 That they ne lette / shipe ne boot to goon
 I seye / whan ye han maad / the coost so clene
 Of Rokkes / that ther nys no stoon ysene 996
 Thanne wol I / loue yow best of any man
 Haue heer my trouthe / in al þat euere I kan
 ¶ Is ther noon oother grace / in yow quod he ?
 ¶ No / by that lord quod she that maked me 1000
 ffor wel I woot þat it shal neuer bityde
 Lat swiche folies / out of youre herte slyde
 What deyntee sholde a man / han in his lyf
 ffor to go loue / another mannes wyf 1004
 That hath hir body / whan so þat hym liketh
 ¶ Aurelius / ful ofte soore siketh
 Wo was Aurelie / whan þat he this herde
 And with a sorweful herte / he thus answerde 1008
 ¶ Madame quod he / this were an impossible
 Thanne moot I dye / of sodeyn deth horrible
 And with that word / he turned hym anon
 Tho coome / hir othere freendes many oon 1012
 And in the Aleyes / romeden vp and down
 And no thyng wiste / of this conclusioun
 But sodeynly / bigonne reuel newe
 Til that the brighte sonne / loste his hewe 1016
 ffor Thorisonte / hath rest the sonne his lyght
 This is as muche to seye / as it was nyght
 And hoom they goon / in ioye and in solas
 Saue oonly / wrecche Aurelius allas 1020

He to his hous is goon / with sorweful herte
 He seeth / he may nat' fro his deeth asterte
 Hym semed / that he felte his herte colde
 Vp to the heuene / hise handes he gan holde 1024
 And on hise knowes bare / he sette hym doun
 And in his rauyngt seyde his orisoun
 ffor verrey wo / out of his wit he breyde
 He nyste what he spak' but thus he seyde 1028
 With pitous herte / his pleynt hath he bigonne
 Vn to the goddes / and first' vn to the sonne
 ¶ He seyde Appollo / god and gouernour ¶ The compleint/ of
 Of euery plaunte / herbe / tree and flour Aurelius/ to the goddes
 and to the sonne ☉
 That yeuest' after thy declinacion
 To ech of hem / his tyme and his seson
 As thyn herberwe / chaungeth lowe or heighe
 Lord Phebus / cast thy merciabe eighe [leaf 131] 1036
 On wrecche Aurelie / which am but lorn
 Lo lord / my lady hath my deeth y-sworn
 With oute gilt' but thy benignytee
 Vpon my dedly herte / haue som pitee 1040
 ffor wel I woot / lord Phebus / if yow lest'
 Ye may me helpen / saue my lady best'
 Now voucheth sau' / þat I may yow deuysel
 How þat I may been holpen / and in what wyse 1044
 ¶ Your blisful suster / Lucina the sheene
 That of the see / is chief goddesse and queene
 Though Neptunus / haue deitee in the See
 Yet Emperisse / abouen hym is she 1048
 Ye knowen wel lord / that right as hir desir
 Is to be quyked / and lightned of youre fir
 ffor which / she folweth yow / ful bisily
 Right/ so / the see desireth naturelly 1052
 To folwen hire / as she that is goddesse
 Bothe in the see / and Ryueres moore and lesse
 Wherefore lord Phebus / this is my requeste
 Do this miracle / or do myn herte breste 1056

That now next at this opposicion
 Which in the signe / shal be of the leon
 As preieth hire / so greet a flood to brynge
 That fyue fadme at the leeste it ouersprynge 1060
 The hyste Rokke / in Armorik/ Briteyne
 And lat this flood / endure yeres tweyne
 Thanne *certes* / to my lady may I seye
 Holdeth youre heste / the Rokkes been aweye 1064
 ¶ Lord Phebus / dooth this miracle for me
 Preye hire / she go no faster cours than ye
 I seye / preyeth your suster / that she go
 No faster cours than ye / thise yeres two 1068
 Thanne shal she been / euene atte fulle alway
 And spryng flood / laste bothe nyght and day
 And but she vouche sauf / in swich manere
 To graunte me / my souereyn lady deere 1072
 Prey hire / to synken euery Rok' adoun
 In to / hir owene dirke Region
 Vnder the ground / ther Pluto dwelleth Inne
 Or neuere mo / shal I my lady wynne 1076
 Thy Temple in Delphos / wol I barefoot seke
 Lord Phebus / se the teeris on my cheke
 And of my peyne / haue som compassioun
 And with that word / in swowne he fil adoun 1080
 And longe tyme / he lay forth in a traunce
 ¶ His brother/ which þat knew of his penaunce
 Vp caughte hym / and to bedde he hath hym broght
 Dispeyred / in this torment and this thoght 1084
 Lete I / this woful creature lye [leaf 131, back]
 Chese he for me / wheither he wol lyue or dye
A rueragus / with heele and greet honour
 As he / þat was / of chiuallrie the flour 1088
 Is comen hoom / and othere worthy men
 O blisful / artow now / thou Dorigen
 That hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne Armes
 The fresshe knyght the worthy man of Armes 1092

That loueth thee / as his owene hertes lyf
 No thyng^t list hym / to been ymaginatyf
 If any wight had spoke / whil he was oute
 To hire of loue / he hadde of it no doute 1096
 He noght entendeth / to no swich mateere
 But daunceth / Iusteth / maketh hire good cheere
 And thus / in ioye and blisse / I lete hem dwelle
 And of the sike Aurelius / I wol yow telle 1100
IN langour/ and in torment furyus
 Two yeer and moore / lay wrecche Aurelyus
 Er any foot^t. he myghte on erthe gon
 Ne confort in this tyme / hadde he noon 1104
 Saue of his brother / which þat was a clerk^t
 He knew of al this wo / and al this werk^t
 ffor to noon oother creature certeyn
 Of this matere / he dorste no word seyn 1108
 Vnder his brest^t he baar it moore secree
 Than euere dide Pamphilus for Galathee
 His brest was hool / with oute for to sende
 But in his herte / ay was the Arwe kene 1112
 And wel ye knowe / that of a Sursanure
 In Surgerye / is perilous the cure
 But men myghte touche the Arwe / or come therby
 His brother / weepe / and wayled pryuely 1116
 Til atte laste / hym fil in remembrañce
 That whiles he was / at Orliens in ffrança
 As yonge clerkes / that been lykerous^t
 To reden Artes / that been curious 1120
 Seken / in euery halke / and euery herne
 Particuler sciences / for to lerne
 He hym remembred / that vpon a day
 At Orliens in studie / a book he say 1124
 Of Magyk/ natureel / which his felawe
 That was that tyme / a Bachelor of lawe
 Al were he ther / to lerne another craft^t
 Hadde priuely / vpon his desk ylast^t 1128

¶ Pamphilus ad
 Galatheam / vulneror
 & clausum porto sub
 pectore telum & cetera

Which book^t spak muchel / of the operacion̄s
 Touchynge / the eighte and twenty mansiōns
 That longen to the moone / and swich folye
 As in oure dayes / is nat worth a flye 1132
 ffor hooly chirches feith / in oure bileue [leaf 132]
 Ne suffreth noon illusion̄ vs to greue
 And whan this book / was in his remembraunce
 Anon for ioye / his herte gan to daunce 1136
 And to hym self^t he seyde pryuely
 My brother / shal be warisshed hastily
 ffor I am siker / þat ther be sciences
 By wh[i]c[h]e / men make diuerse apparences 1140
 Swiche / as thise subtile tregetours pleye
 ffor ofte at feestes / haue I wel herd seye
 That tregetours / with Inne an halle large
 Haue maad come In / a water and a barge 1144
 And in the halle / rowen vp and down
 Somtyme / hath semed come a grym leoun
 And somtyme floures sprynge / as in a Mede
 Somtyme a Vyne / and grapes white and rede 1148
 Somtyme a Castel / al of lym and stoon
 And whan hym lyked / voyded it anoon
 Thus semed it^t to every mannes sighte
 ¶ Now thanne conclude I thus / þat if I myghte 1152
 At Orliens / som oold felawe yfynde
 That hadde / this moones mansions in mynde
 Or oother Magyk^t natureel aboute
 He sholde wel make / my brother han his loue 1156
 ffor with an apparence / a clerk^t may make
 To mannes sighte / þat alle the Rokkes blake
 Of Britaigne / weren yvoyded euerichon
 And shippes / by the brynke comen and gon 1160
 And in swich forme / enduren a wowke or two
 Thanne were my brother // warissied of his wo
 Thanne moste she nedes / holden hire biheste
 Or elles / he shal shame hire atte leeste 1164

- ¶ What sholde I make / a lenger tale of this
 Vn to his brotheres bed / he comen is
 And swich confort he yaf hym for to gon
 To Orliens / that he vp stirte anon 1168
 And on his wey / forthward thanne is he fare
 In hope / for to been lissed of his care
- ¶ Whan they were come / almost to that Citee
 But if it were / a two furlong or thre 1172
 A yong clerk romynge by hym self they mette
 Which þat in latyn / thriftily hem grette
 And after that he seyde a wonder thyng
 I knowe quod he / the cause of youre comyng 1176
 And er they ferther / any foote wente
 He tolde hem / al that was in hire entente
- ¶ This Briton clerk hym asked of felawes
 The whiche þat he had knowe / in olde dawes 1180
 And he answerde hym / that they dede were [leaf 132, back]
 ffor which / he weep ful ofte many a teere
- ¶ Doun of his hors / Aurelius lighte anon
 And with this Magicien / forth is he gon 1184
 Hoom to his hous / and maden hem wel at ese
 Hem lakked no vitaille / þat myghte hem plesse
 So wel arrayed hous / as ther was oon
 Aurelius in his lyf / saugh neuere noon 1188
- ¶ He shewed hym / er he wente to Sopeer
 fforestes / Parkes / ful of wilde deer
 Ther saugh he hertes / with hir hornes hye
 The gretteste / that euere were seyn with eye 1192
 He saugh of hem / an hondred slayn with houndes
 And somme with Arwes blede / of bittre woundes
- ¶ He saugh / whan voyded were these wilde deer
 These ffauconers / vpon a fair Ryuer 1196
 That with hir haukes / han the heron slayn
- ¶ Tho saugh he knyghtes / iustying in a playn
 And after this / he dide hym swich plesaunce
 That he hym shewed / his lady on a daunce 1200

On which hym self / he daunced / as hym thoughte	
And whan this Maister / þat this Magyk wroughte	
Saugh it was tyme / he clapte hise handes two	
And farewel / al oure reuel was ago	1204
And yet remoeued they neuere / out of the hous	
Whil they saugh / al this sighte merucillous	
But in his studie / ther as hise bookes be	
They seten stille / and no wight' but they thre	1208
¶ To hym / this Maister called his Squier	
And seyde hym thus / is redy oure soper	
Almoost' an heure it is I vndertake	
Sith I yow bad / oure soper for to make	1212
Whan that thise worthy men / wenten with me	
In to my studie / ther as my bookes be	
¶ Sire quod this Squier / whan it liketh yow	
It is al redy / though ye wol right now	1216
Go we thanne soupe quod he / as for the beste	
This amorous folk / som tyme moote han hir reste	
¶ At after soper / fille they in trettee	
What somme / sholde this Maistres gerdon be	1220
To remoeuen / alle the Rokkes of Britayne	
And eek from Gerounde / to the mouth of Sayne	
¶ He made it straunge / and swoor / so god hym saue	
Lasse than a thousand pound / he wolde nat haue	1224
Ne gladly / for that somme he wolde nat goon	
¶ Aurelius / with blisful herte anoon	
Answerde thus / fy on a thousand pound	
This wyde world / which that men seye is round	1228
¶ I wolde it yeue / if I were lord of it	[leaf 133]
This bargayn is ful dryue / for we been knyht	
Ye shal be payed / trewely by my trouthe	
But looketh now / for no necligence or slouth	1232
Ye tarie vs heere / no lenger than to morwe	
¶ Nay quod this clerk' haue heer my feith to borwe	
¶ To bedde is goon Aurelius / whan hym leste	
And wel ny / al that nyght he hadde his reste	1236

What for his labour / and his hope of blisse
 His woful herte / of penaunce hadde a lisse
 ¶ Vpon the morwe / whan þat it was day
 To Britaigne / tooke they the righte way 1240
 Aurelius / and this Magicien bisyde
 And been descended / ther they wolde abyde
 And this was / as thise bookes me remembre
 The colde / frosty seson of Decembre 1244
Phebus wax old / and hewed lyk laton
 That in his hoothe declynacion
 Shoon as the burned gold / with stremes brighte
 But now in Capricorn / adoun he lighte 1248
 Where as he shoon ful pale / I dar wel seyn
 The bittre frostes / with the sleet and reyn
 Destroyed hath the grene / in euery yerke
 Ianus sit by the fyr / with double berke ¶ Ianus biceps ☽
 And drynketh / of his bugle horn the wyn
 Biforn hym / stant brawen / of the tusked swyn
 And Nowel / crieth euery lusty man
 ¶ Aurelius / in al that euere he kan 1256
 Dooth to his Maister / chiere and reuerence
 And preyeth hym / to doon his diligence
 To bryngen hym / out of his peynes smerte
 Or with a swerke / þat he wolde slitte his herte 1260
 ¶ This subtil clerk' swich routhe had of this man
 That nyght and day / he spedde hym þat he kan
 To wayten a tyme / of his conclusioñ
 This is to seye / to maken illusioñ 1264
 By swich a apparence or Iogelrye
 I ne kan no termes / of Astrologye
 That she and euery wight' sholde wene and seye
 That of Britaigne / the Rokkes were aweye 1268
 Or ellis / they were sonken vnder grounde
 So atte laste / he hath his tyme yfounde
 To maken hise Iapes / and his wrecchednesse
 Of swich / a supersticious cursednesse 1272

- Hise tables tolletanes / forth he brought
 ful wel corrected / ne ther lakked nougħt
 Neither his collect' ne hise expans yeeris
 Ne hise rootes / ne hise othere geeris 1276
 As been his centris / and hise Argumentz [leaf 133, back]
 And hise *proporcioneles* conuenientz
 ffor hise equacions / in *euery* thyng'
 And by his .8. speere in his wirkyng' 1280
 He knew ful wel / how fer Alnath was shoue ¶ Alnath dicitur
 ffro the heed / of thilke fixe Aries aboute prima mansio
 lune.
 That in the .9. speere considered is ¶ In nona spera ☽
 fful subtilly / he hadde kalkuled al this 1284
 ¶ Whan he hadde founde / his firste mansioñ
 He knew the remenañt' by *proporcioñ*
 And knew the arisyng' of his moone weel
 And in whos face / and *terme* and *euerydeel* 1288
 And knew ful weel / the moones mansioñ
 Acordaunt' to his operacioñ
 And knew also / hise othere *obseruañces*
 ffor swiche *illusions* / and swiche *meschañces* 1292
 As hethen folk / vseden in thilke dayes
 ffor which / no lenger maked he delayes
 But thurgh his magik / for a wyke or tweye
 It semed / that alle the Rokkes were aweye 1296
 ¶ Aurelius / which þat yet despeired is
 Wher he shal han his loue / or fare amys
 Awaiteth nygħt and day / on this myracle
 And whan he knew / þat ther was noon obstacle 1300
 That voyded were / thise Rokkes *euerychon*
 Doun / to hise Maistres feet' he fil anon
 And seyde / I woful wrecche Aurelius
 Thanke yow lord / and lady myn Venus 1304
 That me han holpen / fro my cares colde
 And to the temple / his wey forth hath he holde
 Where as he knew / he sholde his lady see
 And whan he saugh his tyme / anon right hee 1303

With dredful herte / and with ful humble cheere
 Salewed hath / his souereyn lady deere
My righte lady / quod this woful man
 Whom I moost drede and loue as I best kan 1312
 And lothest were / of al this world displese
 Nere it þat I for yow / haue swich disece
 That I moste dyen heere / at youre foot anon
 Noght wolde I telle / how me is wo bigon 1316
 But certes / outhere moste I dye or pleyne
 Ye sle me giltles / for verray peyne
 But of my deeth / thogh þat ye haue no routh
 Auyseth yow / er þat ye breke youre trouthe 1320
 Repenteth yow / for thilke god aboute
 Er ye me sleen / by cause þat I yow loue
 ffor madame / wel ye woot what ye han highit
 Nat þat I chalange / any thyng of right 1324
 Of yow my souereyn lady / but youre grace [leaf 134]
 But in a gardyn yond / at swich a place
 Ye woot right wel / what ye bihighten me
 And in myn hand / youre trouthe plighiten ye 1328
 To loue me best god woot ye seyde so
 Al be / þat I vnworthy be therto
 Madame I speke it / for the honour of yow
 Moore than to saue / myn hertes lyf right now 1332
 I haue do so / as ye comanded me
 And if ye vouche sauf / ye may go see
 Dooth as yow list haue youre biheste in mynde
 ffor quyke or deed / right there ye shal me fynde 1336
 In yow lith al / to do me lyue or deye
 But wel I woot the Rokkes been aweye
 ¶ He taketh his leue / and she astonied stood
 In al hir face / nas a drope of blood 1340
 She wende neuere / han come in swich a trappe
 Allas quod she / þat euere this sholde happe
 ffor wende I neuere / by possibilitee
 That swich a Monstre / or merueille myghte be 1344

It is / agayns the proces of nature
 And hoom she goth / a sorweful creature
 ffor verray feere / vnnethe may she go
 She wepeth / wailleth / al a day or two 1348
 And swowneth / that it routhe was to see
 But why it was / to no wight tolde shee
 ffor out of towne / was goon Arueragus
 But to hir self/ she spak' and seyde thus 1352
 With face pale / and *wit* ful sorweful cheere
 In hire compleynt' as ye shal after heere ¶ The compleynt/of
 Dorigene ayeys ffortune
 ¶ Allas quod she / on thee ffortune I pleyne
 That vnwar: / wrapped hast me in thy cheyne 1356
 ffor which tescape / woot I no scour
 Saue oonly / deeth or dishonour
 Oon of thise two / bihoueth me to chese
 But natheles / yet haue I leuere to lese 1360
 My lif/ than of my body haue a shame
 Or knowe my seluen fals / or lese my name
 And with my deth / I may be quyt' ywis
 Hath ther nat/ many a noble wyf er this [Latin note, p. 525.]
 And many a mayde / yslayn hir self allas
 Rather / than *wit* hir body doon trespas
 ¶ Yis certes / lo thise stories beren witnessse
 Whan .xxx. tirauntz / ful of cursednesse 1368
 Hadde slayn Phidon / in Atthenes at feste
 They comanded / hise doghitres for tareste
 And bryngen hem / biforn hem in despit'
 Al naked / to fulfille hir foul delit' 1372
 And in hir fadres blood / they made hem daunce [ff 134, bk]
 Vpon the pauement' god yeue hem myschaunce
 ffor which / thise woful maydens ful of drede
 Rather / than they wolde lese hir maydenheȝe 1376
 They priuely / been stirt/ in to a welle
 And dreynte hem seluen / as the bookes telle
They of Mecene / leete enquere and seke ¶ Cum .50^a. vir-
 gines lacedoniorum
 Of Lacedomye / fifty maydens eke Messeni violare
 temptassent /

- On whiche / they wolden doon hir lecherye
 But was ther noon of al that compaignye
 That she nas slayn / and with a good entente
 Chees / rather for to dye than assente 1384
 To been oppressed / of hir maydenhede
 Why sholde I thanne / to dye been in drede
Look / the tiraunt Aristoclydes [Latin note, p. 499]
 That loued a mayden / heet Stymphalides 1388
 Whan that hir fader / slayn was on a nyght
 Vn to Diances temple / goth she right
 And hente the ymage / in hir handes two
 ffro which ymage / wolde she neuere go 1392
 No wight / ne myghte hir handes of it arace
 Til she was slayn / right in the selue place
 ¶ Now sith þat maydens / hadden swich despit
 To been defouled / with mannes foul delit 1396
 Wel oghte a wyf / rather hir seluen slee
 Than be defouled / as it thynketh me
What shal I seyn / of Hasdrubales wyf [Latin note, p. 499]
 That at Cartage / birafte hir self hir lyf 1400
 ffro whan she saugh / that Romayns wan the toun
 She took hir children alle / and skipte adoun
 In to the fyr / and chees rather to dye
 Than any Romayu / dide hire vileynye 1404
Hath nat Lucesse / yslayn hir self allas [Latin note, p. 499]
 At Rome / whan she oppressed was
 Of Tarquyn / for hire thoughte it was a shame
 To lyuen / whan she had lost hir name 1408
The seuene maydens / of Melesie also [Latin note, p. 499]
 Han slayn hem self / for drede and wo
 Rather than folk of Gawle / hem sholde oppresse
 Mo than a thousand stories / as I gesse 1412
 Koude I now telle / as'touchynge this mateere
Whan habradate was slayn / his wyf so deere [Latin note, p. 499]
 Hirseluene slow / and leet hir blood to glyde
 In habradates woundes depe and wyde 1416

- And seyde my body / at the leeste way
 Ther shal no wight / defoulen if I may
 ¶ What sholde I / mo ensamples heer of sayn
 Sith that so manye / han hem seluen slayn 1420
 Wel rather / than they wolde defouled be [leaf 135]
 I wol conclude / that it is bet for me
 To sleen my self / than been defouled thus
 I wol be trewe / vn to Arueragus 1424
 Or rather/ sleen my self in som manere
As dide / Demociones doghter deere [Latin note, p. 499]
 By cause / þat she wolde nat defouled be
OCedasus / it is ful greet pitee ¶ Quo ore laudande sunt
 Cedasij filie & cetera
 To reden / how thy doghtren deyde allas
 That slowe hem self / for swich manere cas
As greet a pitee was it/ or wel moore [Latin note, p. 499]
 The Theban mayden / that for Nichanore 1432
 Hir seluen slow / right for swich manere wo
Another Theban mayden / dide right so [Latin note, p. 499]
 ffor oon of Macidonye / hadde hire oppressed
 She with hire deeth / hir maydenhede redressed 1436
What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf [Latin note, p. 499]
 That for swich cas / birafte hir self hir lyf /
How trewe eek⁴ was / to Alcebiades⁵ ¶ Alcebiades ille socra-
 ticus victus & cetera
 His loue / rather for to dyen chees 1440
 Than for to suffre / his body vnburied be
Lo which a wyf / was Alceste quod she [Latin note, p. 499]
What seith Omer / of goode Penalopee
 Al Grece / knoweth of hire chastitee 1444
Pardee / of Lacedomya / is writen thus [Latin note, p. 499]
 That whan at Troie / was slayn Protheselaus
 No lenger/ wolde she lyue / after his day
The same / of noble Porcia telle I may ¶ Porcia sine Bruto
 viuere non potuit
 With oute Brutus / koude she nat lyue
 To whom she hadde / al hool hir herte yeue
The parfit wyfhod of Arthemesie [Latin note, p. 499]
 Honored is / thurgh al the Barbarie 1452

- O** Teuta queene / thy wyfly chastitee [Latin note, p. 499]
 To alle wyues / may a Mirour bee
- T**he same thyng^t / I seye of Bilyea [Latin note, p. 499]
- O**f Rodogone / and eek Valeria 1456
- ¶ Thus pleyne Dorigene / a day or tweye
 Purposynge euere / that she wolde deye
- ¶ But nathelees / vpon the thridde' nyght^t
 Hoom cam Arueragus / this worthy knyght^t 1460
 And asked hire / why that she weepe so soore
 And she gan wepen / euer lenger the moore
- ¶ Allas quod she / that euere I was born
 Thus haue I seyde quod she / thus haue I sworn 1464
 And toold hym al / as ye han herd bifore [Latin note, p. 499]
 It nedeth nat' reheree it yow namoore
- ¶ This housbonde / with glad chiere in freendly wyse
 Answerde and seyde / as I shal yow deuyse 1468
 Is ther oght elles Dorigen / but this ? [leaf 135, back]
- ¶ Nay nay quod she / god helpe me so as wys
 This is to mucche / and it were goddes wille
- ¶ Ye wyf quod he / lat slepen that is stille 1472
 It may be wel / parauenture yet to day
 Ye shul youre trouthe / holden by my fay
 ffor god so wisly / haue mercy vp on me
 I hadde wel leuere / ystiked for to be 1476
 ffor verray loue / which that I to yow haue
 But if ye sholde / youre trouthe kepe *and* saue
 Trouthe / is the hyeste thyng^t þat man may kepe
 But *wiith* that word / he brast anon to wepe 1480
 And seyde / I yow forbede / vp peyne deeth
 That neuere / whil thee lasteth / lyf ne breeth
 To no wight^t telle thou of this auenture
 As I may best^t I wol my wo endure 1484
 Ne make / no contenance of heynesse
 That folk / of yow / may demen harm or gesse
- ¶ And forth / he cleped / a squier and a mayde
 Gooth forth anon / with Dorigen he sayde 1488

And bryngeth hire / to swich a place anon	
They take hir leue / and on hir wey they gon	
But they ne wiste / why she thider wente	
He nolde / no wight tellen his entente	1492
¶ Paraventure / an heepe of yow ywis	
Wol holden hym / a lewed man in this	
That he wol putte / his wyf in Iupartie	
Herkneth the tale / er ye vp on hire crie	1496
She may haue better fortune / than yow semeth	
And whan þat ye han herd the tale / demeth	
T his squier / which þat highte Aurelius	
On Dorigen / that was so amorus	1500
Of aventure / happed hire to meete	
Amydde the toun / right in the quykkeste strete	
As she was boun / to goon the wey forth right	
Toward the gardyn / ther as she had hight	1504
And he was / to the gardynward also	
for wel he spyed / whan she wolde go	
Out of hir hous / to any maner place	
But thus they mette / of aventure or grace	1508
And he saleweth hire / with glad entente	
And asked of hire / whiderward she wente	
¶ And she answerde / half as she were mad	
Vn to the gardyn / as myn housbonde bad	1512
My trouthe for to holde / allas / allas	
¶ Aurelius / gan wondren on this cas	
And in his herte / hadde greet compassion	
Of hire / and of hire lamentacion	1516
¶ And of Arueragus the worthy knyght	[leaf 136]
That bad hire holden / al þat she had hight	
So looth hym was / his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe	
And in his herte / he caughte of this greet routhe	1520
Considerynge / the beste on euery syde	
That fro his lust yet were hym leuere abyde	
Than doon / so heigh a cherlyssh wrecchednesse	
Agayns franchise / and alle gentillesse	1524

ffor which / in fewe wordes seyde he thus
 ¶ Madame / seyeth to youre lord Arueragus
 That sith I se his grete gentillesse
 To yow / and eek I se wel youre distresse 1528
 That him were leuere han shame / and þat were routhe
 Than ye to me / sholde breke thus youre trouthe
 I haue wel leuere / euere to suffre wo
 Than I departe / the loue bitwix yow two 1532
 I yow relese madame / in to youre hond
 Quyt^t euery ¹surement^t and euery bond^t [¹ or sirement]
 That ye han maad to me / as heer biforn
 Sith thilke tyme / which þat ye were born 1536
 My trouthe I pligh^te / I shal yow neuer repreue
 Of no biheste / and heere I take my leue
 As of the treweste / and the beste wyf/
 That euere yet^t I knew in al my lyf/ 1540
 But euery wyf/ be war of hire biheeste
 On Dorigene / remembreth / atte leeste
 Thus kan a Squier/ doon a gentil dede
 As wel as kan a knyght with outen drede 1544
 ¶ She thonketh hym / vp on hir knees al bare
 And hoom / vn to hir housbonde is she fare
 And tolde hym al / as ye han herd me sayd^t
 And be ye siker / he was so weel apayd^t 1548
 That it were impossible / me to wryte
 What sholde I lenger / of this cas endyte
 ¶ Arueragus / and Dorigene his wyf
 In souereyn blisse / leden forth hir lyf 1552
 Neuere eft^t ne was ther Angre hem bitwene
 He cherisseth hire / as though she were a queene
 And she was to hym / trewe for euere moore
 Of this folk / ye gete of me namoore 1556
 Aurelius / that his cost^t hath al forlorn
 A Curseth the tyme / þat euere he was born
 Allas quod he / allas that I bihighte
 Of pured gold / a thousand pound of wighte 1560

- Vn to this Philosophre / how shal I do
 I se namoore / but that I am fordo
 Myn heritage / moot I nedes selle
 And been a beggere / heere may I nat dwelle 1564
 And shamen / al my kynrede in this place [leaf 136, back]
 But I of hym / may gete bettre grace
 But natheles / I wole of hym assaye
 At certeyn dayes / yeer by yeer to paye 1568
 And thanke hym / of his grete curteisye
 My trouthe wol I kepe / I wol nat lye
 ¶ With herte soor / he gooth vn to his cofre
 And broghte gold / vn to this Philosophre 1572
 The value / of fyue hundred pound I gesse
 And hym bisecheth of his gentillesse
 To graunte hym dayes of the remenaunt
 And seyde maister / I dar wel make auaunt 1576
 I failed neuere / of my trouthe as yit
 ffor sikerly / my dette shal be quyt
 Towardes yow / how euere that I fare
 To goon a begged / in my kirtle bare 1580
 But wolde ye vouche sauf / vp on seuretee
 Two yeer or thre / for to respiten me
 Thanne were I wel / for elles moot I selle
 Myn heritage / ther is namoore to telle 1584
This Philosophre / sobrelly answerde
 And seyde thus / whan he thise wordes herde
 Haue I nat holden couenant vn to thee ?
 ¶ Yes certes / wel and trewely quod he 1588
 ¶ Hastow nat had / thy lady / as thee liketh ?
 ¶ No no quod he / and sorwefully he siketh
 ¶ What was the cause / tel me if thou kan ?
 ¶ Aurelius / his tale anon bigau 1592
 And tolde hym al / as ye han herd bifoore
 It nedeth nat / to yow reherce it moore
 ¶ He seide / Arueragus of gentillesse
 Hadde leuere dye / in sorwe / and in distresse 1596

Than þat his wyf / were of hir trouthe fals
 The sorwe of Dorigen / he tolde hym als
 How looth hire was / to been a wikked wyf
 And þat she leuere had lost^t that day hir lyf^t 1600
 And þat hir trouthe / she swoor thurgh Innocence
 She neuere erst^t hadde herd speke of Apparence
 That made me han of hire so greet pitee
 And right as frely / as he sente hire me 1604
 As frely / sente I hire to hym ageyn
 This al and som / ther is namoore to seyn
 ¶ This Philosophre answerde / leeu brother
 Euerich of yow / dide gentilly til oother 1608
 Thou art a Squier / and he is a knygh^t
 But god forbede / for his blisful mygh^t
 But if a clerk / koude doon a gentil dede
 As wel as any of yow / it is no drede 1612
 ¶ Sire / I releesse thee / thy thousand^l pound^l [leaf 137]
 As thou right now / were copen out of the ground^l
 Ne neuere er now / ne haddest knowen me
 ffor sire / I wol nat taken a peny of thee 1616
 ffor al my craft^t ne noght^t for my trauaille
 Thou hast^t ypayed wel / for my vitaille
 It is ynogh / and farewel haue good day
 And took his hors / and forth he goth his way 1620
Lordynges / this question^l thanne wolde I aske now
 Which was the mooste fre as thynketh yow
 Now telleth me / er that ye ferther wende
 I kan namoore / my tale is at an ende 1624
 ¶ Heere is ended the ffrankeleyns tale

[Note to l. 1364, see l. 1368, p. 518.]

¶ 30. Atheniensium tyranni cum Phidonem necassent/ in conuiuiu filias eius virgines ad se venire iusserunt & scortorum more nudari / ac super pauimenta patris sanguine cruentatas inpudicis gestibus ludere ¶ que paulisper dissimulato dolore cum timulentos conuiuas cernerent quasi ad requisita nature egredientes inuicem se complexē precipitauerunt in puteum vt virginitatem morte seruarent/ [MS, leaf 133.]

GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

§ 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

ELLESMERE MS.

¶ Heere folweth / the Phisiciens tale [on leaf 137]

Ther was / as telleth Titus Liviuis
 A knyght that was called Virginius
 ffulfild / of honour / and of worthynesse
 And strong of freendes / and of greet richesse 4

¶ This knyght a doghter hadde by his wyf / [Painting of
the Physician]
 No children hadde he mo in al his lyf

ffair was this mayde / in excellent beautee
 Abouen euery wight that man may see 8

ffor Nature / hath with souereyn diligence
 Yformed hire / in so greet excellence

As though she wolde seyn / lo I Nature
 Thus kan I forme / and peynte a creature 12

Whan that me list who kan me countrefete
 Pigmalion noght / though he ay forge and bete ¶ Quere in Metha-
morphosios

Or graue / or peynte / for I dar wel seyn
 Apelles Zanzis / sholde werche in veyn ¶ Apelles fecit mira-
bile opus in tumulo
Darii / Vide in Alex-
andro libro .12. de
Zanze in libro Tullij.

Outher to graue / or peynte / or forge / or bete
 If they presumed / me to countrefete

ffor he that is the formere principal
 Hath maked me / his vicaire general 20

To forme and peynten erthely creaturis
 Right as me list and ech thyng in my cure is

Vnder the Moone / þat may wane and waxe
 And for my werk right no thyng wol I axe 24

My lord and I / been ful of oon accord	
I made hire / to the worshipe of my lord	
So do I / alle myne othere creatures	
What colour that they han / or what figures	28
Thus semeth me / that Nature wolde seye	[leaf 137, back]
¶ This mayde of Age .xij. yeer was and tweye	
In which þat Nature / hadde swich delit	
ffor right as she kan peynte a lilie whit	32
And reed a Rose / right with swich peynture	
She peynted hath this noble creature	
Er she were born / vp-on hir lymes fre	
Where as by right / swiche colours sholde be	36
And Phebus dyed hath / hire treses grete	
Lyk to the stremes / of his burned heete	
And if þat excellent was hire beautee	
A thousand foold / moore vertuouus was she	40
In hire / ne lakked no condicioñ	
That is to preyse / as by discrecioñ	
As wel in goost as body / chast was she	
ffor which / she floured in virginitee	44
With alle humylitee / and Abstinence	
With alle attemperaunce and pacience	
With mesure eek / of beryng and array	
Discreet she was / in answeyng alway	48
Though she were wise Pallas dar I seyn	
Hir facound eek / ful wommanly a pleyn	
No countrefeted termes / hadde she	
To seme wys / but after hir degree	52
She spak / and alle hire wordes moore <i>and</i> lesse	
Sownynge in vertu / and in gentillesse	
Shamefast she was / [in] maydens shamefastnesse	
Constant in herte / and euere in bisynesse	56
To dryue hire / out of ydel slogardye	
Bacus hadde of hire mouth / right no maistrie	
ffor wyn and youthe / dooth Venus encresse	
As man in fyr / wol wasten oille or gresse	60

And of hir owene vertu / vnconstreyned She hath ful ofte tyme syk hire feyned ffor that she wolde fleen the compaignye Where likly was / to treten of folye	64
As is at feestes / reuels / and at daunces That been / occasions of daliaunces Swich thyng / maken children for to be To soone rype and boold / as men may se	68
Which is ful perilous / and hath been yoore ffor al to soone / may they lerne loore Of booldnesse / whan she woxen is a wyf ^t ¶ And ye maistresses / in youre olde lyf ^t	72
That lordes doghtres / han in gouernañce Ne taketh of my wordes no displesañce Thenketh / that ye been set in gouernynges Of lordes doghtres / oonly for two thynges	76
Outher / for ye han kept ^t youre honestee Or elles / ye han falle in freletee And knowen wel ynough ^h the olde daunce And han forsaken / fully swich meschaunce	80
ffor eueremo / therfore for Cristes sake To teche hem vertu / looke þat ye ne slake ¶ A thief of venyson / that hath forlaft ^t His likerousnesse / and al his olde craft ^t	84
Kan kepe a fforest ^t best of any man Now kepeth wel / for if ye wolde ye kan Looke wel / þat ye / vn-to no vice assente Lest ye be dampned / for youre wikke entente	88
ffor who so dooth / a traitour is certeyn And taketh kepe / of that þat I shal seyn Of alle tresons / souereyn pestilence	Nota
Is / whan a wigh ^t bitrayseth Innocence ¶ Ye fadres and ye moodres / eek also Though ye han children / be it oon or two Youre is the charge / of al hir surueiañce	92
Whil þat they been / vnder youre gouernañce	96

Beth war / if by ensample / of youre lyuyng	
Or by youre necligence / in chastisyng	
That they perisse / for I dar wel seye	
If þat they doon / ye shul it deere abeye	100
Vnder a shepherde / softe and necligent	
The wolf / hath many a sheepe and lamb to-rent'	
[.]	
. no gap in the MS.]	104
T his mayde / of which I wol this tale expresse	
So kepte hir self' hir neded no maistresse	
ffor in hir lyuyng' maydens myghten rede	
As in a book/ every good word or dede	108
That longeth to a mayden vertuous	
She was so prudent' and so bounteous	
ffor which / the fame / out sprong on euery syde	
Bothe of hir beautee and hir bountee wyde	112
That thurgh that land / they praised hire echone	
That loued vertu / saue Enuye alone	
That sory is / of oother mennes wele ¶ Augustinus	
And glad is of his sorwe / and his vnheel	116
The doctour / maketh this descripcioun	
This mayde vp-on a day / wente in the toun	
Toward a temple / with hire mooder deere	
As is / of yonge maydens the manere	120
¶ Now was ther thanne / a Iustice in that toun	
That governour was / of that Regioun	
And so bifel / this Iuge / hise eyen caste	
Vp-on this mayde / auysyng hym ful faste	124
As she cam forby / ther as this Iuge stood'	
Anon / his herte chaunged and his mood'	
So was he caught' with beautee of this mayde [leaf 138, back]	
And to hym self / ful pryuely he sayde	128
This mayde / shal be myn / for any man	
¶ Anon the feend / in-to his herte ran	
And taughte hym sodeynly / þat he by slyghthe	
The mayden / to his purpos wyne myghthe	132

ffor certes by no force / ne by no meede
 Hym thoughte / he was nat^t able for to speede
 ffor she was strong^t of freendes / and eek she
 Confermed was / in swich souerayn bountee 136
 That wel he wiste / he myghte hire neuere wynne
 As for to maken hire / with hir body synne
 ffor which / by greet deliberacioun
 He sente after a cherl / was in the toun 140
 Which þat he knew / for subtil and for boold^t
 This Iuge / vn-to this cherl / his tale hath toold^t
 In secree wise / and made hym to ensure
 He sholde telle it^t to no creature 144
 And if he dide / he sholde lese his heed^t
 Whan þat assented was / this cursed reed^t
 Glad was this Iuge / and maked him greet cheere
 And yaf hym yiftes / preciouise and deere 148
 ¶ Whan shapen was / al hire conspiracie
 ffor point to point^t how þat his lecherie
 Parfourned sholde been ful subtilly
 As ye / shul heere it after openly 152
 Hoom gooth the cherl / þat highte Claudius
 This false Iuge / that highte Apius
 So was his name / for this is no fable
 But knowen / for historial thyng notable 156
 The sentence of it^t sooth is out of doute
 This false Iuge / gooth now faste aboute
 To hasten his deli^t al that he may
 And so bifel / soone after on a day 160
 This false Iuge / as telleth vs the storie
 As he was wont^t sat in his Consistorie
 And yaf his doomes / vp-on sondry cas
 This false cherl / cam forth / a ful greet pas 164
 And seyde lord / if þat it be youre wille
 As dooth me right / vp-on this pitous bille
 In which I pleyne / vp-on Virginius
 And if þat he wol seyn / it is nat thus 168

I wol it preue / and fynde good wisse	
That sooth is / that my bille wol expresse	
¶ The Iuge answerde / of this in his absence	
I may nat yeue / diffyny[ty]ue sentence	172
Lat do hym calle / and I wol gladly heere	
Thou shalt haue al right and no wrong heere	
¶ Virginius / cam to wite the Iuges wille	[Deaf 139]
And right anon / was rad this cursed bille	176
The sentence of it / was as ye shul heere	
¶ To yow my lord / sire Apius so deere	
Sheweth youre poure seruant Claudius	
How that a knyght / called Virginius	180
Agayns the lawe / agayn al equitee	
Holdeth expres / agayn the wyl of me	
My seruant. which þat is my thral by right	
Which fro myn hous / was stole vp-on a nyght	184
Whil þat she was ful yongt this wol I preue	
By wisse lord / so þat it nat yow greue	
She nys his doghter nat what so he seye	
Wherfore / to yow / my lord the Iuge I preye	188
yeld me my thral / if þat it be youre wille	
Lo / this was / al the sentence of his bille	
¶ Virginius / gan vp-on the cherl biholde	
But hastily / er he his tale tolde	192
And wolde haue preued it as sholde a knyght	
And eek by witnessyngt of many a wight	
That it was fals / that seyde his Aduersarie	
This cursed Iuge / wolde no thyng tarie	196
Ne heere a word moore of Virginius	
But yaf his Iuggement and seyde thus	
¶ I deeme anon / this cherl his seruant haue	
Thou shalt no lenger / in thyn hous hir saue	200
Go bryng hire forth / and put hire in oure ward	
The cherl shal haue his thral / this I awarde	
¶ And whan this worthy knyght Virginius	
Thurgh sentence / of this Iustice Apius	204

Moste by force / his deere doghter yeuen
 Vn-to the Iuge / in lecherie to lyuen
 He gooth hym hoom / and sette him in his halle
 And leet anon / his deere doghter calle 208
 And with a face deed / as asshen colde
 Vpon hir humble face / he gan biholde
 With fadres pitee / stikynge thurgh his herte
 Al wolde he / from his purpos nat conuerte 212
Doghter quod he / Virginia / by thy name
 Ther been two weyes / outhere deeth or shame
 That thou most / suffre / allas þat I was bore
 ffor neuere / thou deseruedest wherfore 216
 To dyen / with a swerd / or with a knyf
 O deere doghter / endere of my lyf
 Which I haue fostred vp / with swich plesaunce
 That thou were neuere / out of my remembraunce 220
 O doghter / which þat art my laste wo
 And in my lyf my laste ioye also
 O gemme o Chastitee in pacience [leaf 139, back]
 Take thou thy deeth / for this is my sentence 224
 ffor loue and nat for hate / thou most be deed
 My pitous hand / moot smyten of thyn heed
 Allas / that euere Apius the say
 Thus hath he falsly / Iugged the to day 228
 And tolde hire al the cas / as ye bifore
 Han herd / nat nedeth for to telle it moore
 ¶ O mercy deere fader / quod this mayde
 And with that word / she both hir Armes layde 232
 About his nekke / as she was wont to do
 The teeris / bruste out of hir eyen two
 And seyde / goode fader shal I dye
 Is ther no grace / is ther no remedye 236
 ¶ No certes / deere doghter myn quod he
 ¶ Thanne yif me leyser / fader myn quod she
 My deeth for to compleyne / a litel space
 ffor pardee Iepte yaf his doghter grace ¶ *Iudicum capitulo. xj.* 240

ffor to compleyne / er he hir slow allas	fruit illo tempore lepte Galaandes	
And god it woot' no thyng was hir trespas		
But for she ran / hir fader for to see		
To welcome hym / with greet solempnitee		244
And <i>with</i> that word / she fil aswowne anon		
And after/ whan hir swownyng' is agon		
She riseth vp / and to hir fader sayde		
Blissed be god / that I shal dye a mayde		248
Yif me my deeth / er that I haue a shame		
Dooth <i>with</i> youre child' / youre wyl a goddes name		
¶ And with that word / she preyed hym ful ofte		
That with his swerd' / he wolde smyte softe		252
And <i>with</i> that word' / aswowne doun she fil		
Hir fader / <i>with</i> ful sorweful herte and wil		
Hir heed of smoot' and by the tope it hente		
And to the Iuge / he gan it to presente		256
As he sat yet' in doom in Consistorie		
And whan the Iuge it saugh' / as seith the storie		
He bad to take hym / and anchange hym faste		
But right anon / a thousand' peple in thraste		260
To saue the knyght' for routhe and for pitee		
ffor knowen was / the false Iniquitee		
The peple anon / hath suspect' of this thyng'		
By manere / of the cherles chalangyng'		264
That it was / by the assent of Apius		
They wisten wel / that he was lecherus		
ffor which / vn-to this Apius they gon		
And caste hym in a prison right anon		268
Ther as he slow hym self' and Claudius		
That seruant was / vn-to this Apius		
And demed / for to hange vpon a tree	[leaf 140]	
But that Virginius / of his pitee		272
So preyde for hym / that he was exiled'		
And elles certes / he had been bigyled'		
The remenant were anchanged moore <i>and</i> lesse		
That were consentant' of this cursednesse		276

Heere men may seen / how synne hath his *merite*
 Beth war / for no man woot^t whom god wol smyte
 In no degree / ne in which manere wyse
 The worm of conscience / may agryse 280
 Of wikked lyf^t though^h it so pryuee be
 That no man / woot ther-of^t but god and he
 ffor be he lewed man / or ellis lered^t
 He noot how soone / þat he shal been afered^t 284
 Therefore I rede yow / this conseil take
 ffor saketh synne / er synne yow forsake

¶ Heere endeth / the Phisiciens tale 𐄂

281

¶ The wordes of the Hoost to the Phisicien and
the Pardoner 𐞂

- O**vre Hoost gan to swere / as he were wood
 Harrow quod he / by nayles and by blood 288
 This was a fals cherl and a fals Iustise
 As shameful deeth / as herte may deuyse
 Come to thise false Iuges / and hire Aduocat
 Algate / this sely mayde / is slayn allas 292
 Allas / to deere boughte she beautee
 Wherefore I seye / al day / as men may see
 That yiftes of ffortune and of Nature
 Been cause of deeth / to many a creature 296
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 Of bothe yiftes / that I speke of now
 Men han ful ofte / moore for harm than prow 300
 ¶ But trewely / myn owene maister deere
 This is / a pitous tale for to heere
 But nathelees / passe ouer / is no fors
 I pray to god / so saue thy gentil cors 304
 And eek / thyne vrynals / and thy Iurdones
 Thyn ypocras / and eek thy Galiones
 And euery boyste / ful of thy letuarie
 God blesse hem / and oure lady Seint Marie 308
 So moot I theen / thou art a propre man
 And lyk a prelat by Seint Ronyan
 Seyde I nat wel / I kan nat speke in terme
 But wel I woot thou doost myn herte to erme 312
 That I almost / haue caught a Cardynacle [leaf 143, back]
 By corpus bones / but I haue triacle
 Or elles a draughte / of moyste and corny Ale
 Or but I heere anon / a myrie tale 316

Myn herte is lost' for pitee of this mayde
 Thou beel amy / thou Pardoner he sayde
 Telle vs som myrthe / or Iapes right anon
 ¶ It shal be doon quod he / by Seint Ronyon) 320
 But first quod he / heere at this Ale stake
 I wol bothe drynke / and eten of a Cake
 ¶ And right anon / the gentils gonne to crye
 Nay / lat hym telle vs of no ribaudye 324
 Telle vs som moral thyng' þat we may leere
 Som wit' and thanne wol we gladly heere
 ¶ I graunte ywis quod he / but I moot thynke
 Vp-on som honeste thyng' while þat I drynke 328

¶ Heere folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners tale [on leaf 140, back]

¶ Radix malorum est Cupiditas Ad Thimotheum .6^o

L Ordynges quod he / in chirches / whan I preche
 I peyne me / to han an hauteyn speche
 And rynges it out^t as round as gooth a belle
 ffor I kan / al by rote that I telle 332
 My theme is alwey oon / and euere was

Radix malorum est Cupiditas

First I pronounce / whennes þat I come
 And thanne my bulles / shewe I alle *and* some 336
 Oure lige lordes seel / on my patente
 That shewe I first^t my body to warente
 That no man be so boold / ne preest ne clerk^t
 Me to destourbe / of Cristes hooly werk^t 340
 And after that^t thanne telle I forth my tales

¹ Bulles of popes ¹ and of Cardynales [¹—¹ nearly scratched
out of the MS]

Of Patriarkes / and bishoppes I shewe
 And in latyn / I speke a wordes fewe 344

To saffron with my predicaciõ

And for to stire hem / to deuociõ

Thanne shewe I forth / my longe cristal stones

Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones 348

Relikes been they / as wenen they echoon

Thanne haue [I] in latoñ a sholder boon

Which that was / of an hooly Iewes sheepe

Goode men I seye / taak^t of my wordes keepe 352

If that this boon / be wasshe in any welle [leaf 141]

If Cow / or Calf^t or Sheepe / or Oxe swelle

That any worm hath ete / or worm ystonge

Taak water of that welle / and wassh his tonge 356

And it is hool anon / and forthermoor
 Of pokkes / and of scabbe / and euery soor
 Shal euery sheepe be hool / þat of this welle
 Drynketh a draughte / taak kepe eek what I telle 360
 ¶ If that the goode man / that the beestes oweth
 Wol euery wyke / er that the Cok hym croweth
 ffastyng drinke / of this welle a draughte
 As thilke hooly Iew / oure eldres taughte 364
 His beestes and his stoor shal multiplie
 ¶ And sire / also / it heeleth Ialousie
 ffor though a man / be falle in Ialous rage
 Lat maken / with this water his potage 368
 And neuere shal he moore / his wyf mystriste
 Though he the soothe / of hir defaute wiste
 Al had she / taken preestes / two or thre
 ¶ Heere is a Miteyn eek / that ye may se 372
 He þat his hand wol putte in this Mitayn
 He shal haue / multipliynge of his grayn
 Whan he hath sowen / be it whete or Otes
 So þat he offre / pens / or elles grottes 376
 ¶ Goode men and wommen / o thyng warne I yow
 If any wight / be in this chirche now
 That hath doon synne horrible þat he s
 Dar nat for shame / of it yshryuen be 380
 Or any womman / be she yong or old
 That hath ymaked / hir housbonde Cokewold
 Swich folk' shal haue no power ne no grace
 To offren / to my relikes in this place 384
 And who so fyndeth hym / out of swich fame
 They wol come vp / and offre on goddes name
 And I assoille hem / by the Auctoritee
 Which that by bulle / ygraunted was to me 388
 ¶ By this gaude / haue I wonne / yeer by yeer
 An hundred mark' sith I was Pardonere
 I stonde lyk a clerk' in my pulpet'
 And whan the lewed peple / is doun yset' 392

I preche so / as ye han herd bifoore	
And telle / an hundred false Iapes moore	
Thanne peyne I me / to strecche forth the nekke	
And Est <i>and</i> West ^t vp-on the peple I bekke	396
As dooth a dowue / sittynge / on a berne	
Myne handes and my tonge goon so yerne	
That it is ioye / to se my bisynesse	
Of Auarice / and of swich cursednesse	400
Is al my prechyng ^t for to make hem free	[leaf 141, back]
To yeuen hir pens / and namely vn-to me	
ffor myn entente / is nat but for to wynne	
And no thyng ^t for correccioñ of synne	404
I rekke neuere / whan they been beryed ^t	
Though þat hir soules / goon a blakeberied	
ffor certes / many a predicacioñ	
Comth ofte tyme / of yuel entencioñ	408
Som for plesance of folk/ and flaterye	
To been auauanced / by ypocrisye	
And som for veyne glorie / and som for hate	
ffor whan / I dar noon oother weyes debate	412
Thanne wol I styng ^e hym / with my tonge smerte	
In prechyng / so that he shal nat asterte	
To been defamed falsly / if that he ^s	
Hath trespassed / to my bretheren / or to me	416
ffor though I telle noght / his propre name	
Men shal wel knowe / that it is the same	
By signes / and by othere circumstanes	
Thus quyte I folk ^t that doon vs displesances	420
Thus spitte I out my venym / vnder hewe	
Of hoolynesse / to semen hooly and trewe	
¶ But shortly myn entente I wol deuys ^e	
I preche of no thyng ^t but for coueityse	424
Therefore / my theme is yet ^t and euere was	
Radix malorum est Cupiditas	
Thus kan I preche / agayn that same vice	
Which þat I vse / and that is Auarice	428

But though my self/ be gilty in that synne
 Yet kan I maken / oother folk' to twynne
 ffrom Auarice / and' soore to repente
 But that is nat/ my principal entente 432
 I preche no thyng' but for coueitise
 Of this mateere / it ogh̄te ynogh̄ suffise
 ¶ Thanne telle I hem / ensamples many oon
 Of olde stories / longe tyme agoon 436
 ffor lewed peple / louen tales olde
 Swiche thynges / kan they wel reporte *and* holde
 What trowe ye / the whiles I may preche
 And wyne / gold and siluer / for I teche 440
 That I wol lyue in pouerte wilfully
 Nay nay / I thogh̄te it neuere trewely
 ffor I wol preche / and begge in sondry landes
 I wol nat' do no labour/ with myne handes 444
 Ne make baskettes / and lyue therby
 By cause / I wol nat beggen ydelly
 I wol noon / of the Apostles countrefete
 I wol haue moneie / wolle chese and whete 448
 Al were it yeuen / of the pouereste page [leaf 142]
 Or of the pouereste wydwe / in a village
 Al sholde hir children sterue / for famyne
 Nay / I wol drynke / licour of the vyne 452
 And haue a ioly wenche / in euery toun
 But herkneth lordynges in conclusioun
 ¶ Yourre likyng is / that I shal telle a tale
 Now / haue I dronke a draugh̄te of corny ale 456
 By god / I hope / I shal yow telle a thyng'
 That shal by reson / been at youre likyng'
 ffor though̄ my self' be a ful vicious man
 A moral tale / yet I yow telle kan 460
 Which I am wont to preche / for to wyne
 Now hoold youre pees / my tale I wol bigynne

¶ Heere bigynneth the Pardoners tale 8
[on leaf 142]

IN fflaundes whilom was a compaignye
 Of yonge folk/ that haunteden folye 464
 As Riot^t hasard / stywes / and Tauernes
 Where / as / with harpes / lutes and Gyternes
 They daunce / and pleyen at dees / bothe day and nyght^t
 And eten also / and drynken ouer hir myght / 468
 Thurgh which / they doon the deuel sacrificise [Painting of the
 Pardoner on
 Horseback.]
 With-Inne that deueles temple in cursed wise
 By superfluytee abhomynable
 Hir othes / been so grete and so dampnable 472
 That it is grisly / for to heere hem swere
 Oure blissed lordes body / they to-tere
 Hem thoughte / þat Iewes / rente hym noght ynough
 And ech of hem / at otheres synne lough 476
 And right anon / thanne comen Tombesteres
 ffetys and smale / and yonge ffrutesteres
 Syngeres with harpes / Baudes / wafereres
 Whiche been / the verray deueles Officeres 480
 To kyndle and blowe / the fyr of lecherye
 That is annexed vn-to glotonye
 The hooly writ/ take I to my witesse
 That luxurie / is in wyn and dronkenesse 484
Lo how þat dronken Looth^t vnkyndely ¶ Nollite inebriari vino /
 in quo est/ luxuria
 Lay by hise doghtres two vnwityngly
 So dronke he was / he nyste what he wroghte
 ¶ Herodes / who so / wel the stories soghte 488
 [.
 no spurious lines in this MS.]

Whan he of wyn / was repleet ^t at his feeste	489
Righ ^t at his owene table / he yaf his heeste	
To sleen the Baptist Iohn / ful giltelees	
¶ Senec ^e seith a good word doutelees	¶ Seneca 492
He seith / he kan no difference fynde	[leaf 142, back]
Bitwix a man / that is out of his mynde	
And a man / which that is dronkelewe	
But that woodnesse / fallen in a shrewe	496
Perseuereth lenger / than dooth dronkenesse	
O glotonye / ful of cursednesse	
O cause first ^t of oure confusio ⁿ	
O original / of oure dampnacio ⁿ	500
Til Crist / hadde boght vs / with his blood agayn	
Lo / how deere / shortly for to sayn	
Aboght was / thilke cursed vileynye	
Corrupt ^t was al this world ^t for glotonye	504
¶ Adam oure fader / and his wyf also	
ffro Paradys / to labour and to wo	
Were dryuen for that vice / it is no drede	507
ffor whil þat Adam fasted / as I rede	¶ <i>Ieronimus contra Iou-</i> <i>nianum</i> <i>Quandiu ieu-</i> <i>nauit Adam / in Paradiso</i> <i>fuit / comedit & eiectus est /</i> <i>statim duxit uxorem</i>
He was in Paradys / and whan þat he ^s	
Eet of the fruyt / deffended on the tree	
Anon he was out cast ^t to wo and peyne	
O glotonye / on thee wel ogh ^t e vs pleyn ^e	512
O wiste a man / how manye maladyes	
ffolwen of excesse / and of glotonyes	
He wolde been / the moore mesurable	
Of his diete / sittynge at his table	-516
Allas / the shorte thro ^t e / the tendre mouth ⁿ	
Maketh þat Est ^t and West ^t and North ⁿ and South ⁿ	
In Erthe / in Eir / in water / man to swynke	
To gete a gloto ⁿ / deyntee mete and drynke	520
Of this matiere / o Paul wel kanstow trete	
Mete vn-to wombe / and wombe eek ^t vn-to mete	¶ <i>Esca ventri</i> & <i>venter escis.</i> <i>deus autem & hunc</i> & <i>illam destruet /</i>
Shal god destroyen bothe / as Paulus seith	
Allas / a foul thyng is it / by my feith ⁿ	524

- To seye this word / and fouler is the dede
 Whan man so drynketh / of the white and rede
 That of his throte / he maketh his pryuee
 Thurgh̄ thilke cursed superfluitee 528
- ¶ The Apostel wepyng^t seith ful pitously ¶ Ad Philipenses
capitulo .3^o
 Ther walken manye / of whiche yow toold haue I
 I seye it now wepyng^t with pitous voys
 Ther been enemys of Cristes croys 532
- Of whiche the ende is deeth / wombe is hir god
 O wombe / o. bely / o. stynkyng Cod^t
 ffulfilled of donge / and of corrupeioun
 At either ende of thee / foul is the soun 536
- How greet labour/ and cost^t is thee to fynde
 Thise Cookes / how they stampe / and streyne and grynde
 And turnen substaunce in-to Accident^t
 To fulfillen / al thy likerous talent^t 540
- Out of the harde bones knocke they [leaf 143]
 The mary / for they caste noght a-wey
 That may go thurgh̄ the golet^t softe and swoote
 Of spicerie / of leef^t / and bark^t and roote 544
- Shal been his sauce ymaked by delit^t
 To make hym yet a newer appetit^t
 But *certes* / he that haunteth swiche delices ¶ Qui autem in de-
licijs est vinens
mortuus est 548
- ¶ A lecherous thyng^t is wyn and dronkenesse ¶ luxuriosa res
vinum / et con-
tumeliosa ebrietas
 Is ful of stryuyng^t and of wrecchednesse
 O dronke man / disfigured is thy face
 Sour is thy breeth / foul artow to embrace 552
- And thurgh̄ thy dronke nose / semeth the soun
 As though̄ thou seydest^t ay Sampson Sampson
 And yet god woot^t Sampson drank neuere no wyn
 Thou fallest/ as it were a styked swyn 556
- Thy tonge is lost/ and al thyn honeste cure
 ffor dronkenesse / is verray sepulture
 Of mannes wit^t and his discrecioñ
 In whom þat drynke hath dominacioñ 560

He kan no conseil kepe / it is no drede
 Now kepe yow / fro the white and fro the rede
 And namely / fro the white wyn of lepe
 That is to selle / in ffysshstrete / or in Chepe 564
 This wyn of Spaigne / crepeth subtilly
 In othere wynes / growynge faste by
 Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee
 That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre 568
 And weneth / that he be at hoom in Chepe
 He is in Spaigne / right at the tounce of lepe
 Nat at the Rochele / ne at Burdeux toun
 And thanne wol he seye / Sampsoun Sampsoun 572
 ¶ But herkneth lordes / o word I yow preye
 That alle the souereyn Actes dar I seye
 Of victories / in the olde testament
 Thurgh verray god / þat is omnipotent 576
 Were doon in Abstinence / and in preyere
 Looketh the Bible / and ther ye may it lecre
 ¶ Looke Atilla the grete Conquerour
 Deyde in his sleepe / with shame and dishonour 580
 Bledynge ay at his nose in dronkenesse
 A Capitayn / sholde lyue in sobrenesse
 And ouer al this / auyseth yow right wel
 What was comaunded / vn to Lamwel ¶ Noli vinum dare 584
 Nat Samuel / but Lamwel seye I
 Redeth the Bible / and fynde it expresly
 Of wyn yeuyng to hem þat han Iustise
 Namore of this / for it may wel suffise 588
A Nd now I haue spoken of Glotony [leaf 143, back]
 Now wol I yow / deffenden hasardrye ¶ Of Hasardrye
 Hasard / is verray mooder of lesynges ¶ Polieratici [Ioannis Saris-
 And of deceite / and cursed forswerynges burienensis] libro .12 / Menda-
 est Alea. ciorum & periuriarum mater
 Blasphemynge of crist manslaughtre and wast also
 Of catel and of tyme / and forthermo
 It is repreeue / and contrarie of honour
 ffor to ben holde / a commune hasardour 596

And euer the hyer/ he is of estaat^t
 The moore / is he holden desolaat^t
 If that a Prynce / vseth hasardrye
 In alle gouernañce and polickey 600
 He is / as by *commune* opinioñ
 Yholde the lasse / in reputacioñ
 ¶ Stilboñ / that was a wys embassadour
 Was sent to Corynthe / in ful greet honour 604
 ffro Lacidomye / to maken hire Alliaunce
 And whan he cam / hym happed[e] *par* chaunce
 That alle the gretteste / that were of that lond^t
 Pleyynge atte hasard^t / he hem fond^t 608
 ffor which / as soone / as it myghte be
 He stal hym hoom agayn / to his contree
 And seyde / ther wol I nat lese my name
 Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame 612
 Yow for to allie / vn-to none hasardours
 Sendeth / othere wise Embassadours
 ffor by my trouthe / me were leuere dye
 Than I yow sholde / to hasardours allye 616
 ffor ye that been / so glorious in honours
 Shul nat allyen yow / with hasardours
 As by my wyl / ne as by my trettee
 This wise Philosophre / thus seyde hee 620
 ¶ Looke eek^t that the kyng^t Demetrius
 The kyng of Parthes as the book seith vs
 Sente him / a paire of dees of gold in scorn
 ffor he hadde vsed / hasard^t ther-biforn 624
 ffor which / he heeld his glorie / or his renoun
 At no value / or reputacioun
 Lordes may fynden / oother maner pley
 Honeste ynough / to dryue the day away 628
Now wol I speke / of othes false and grete ¶ Of sweryng^t &
 A word or two / as olde bookes trete foraweryng^t
 Gret sweryng^t is a thyng^t abhominable
 And fals sweryng^t is yet moore repreuable 632

The heighe god / forbad sweryng^t at al ¶ *Nolite omzino Iurare*
 Witnesse on Mathew / but in special
 Of sweryng^t seith the hooly Ieremye ¶ *Ieremie. 49 ¶. Iurabis in veri-*
 Thou shalt seye sooth thyne othes and nat lye 636 *tate in Iudicio & Iusticia*
 And swere in doom / and eek in rightwisnesse [leaf 144]
 But ydel sweryng^t is a cursednesse
 Bihoold and se / that in the firste table
 Of heighe goddes heestes honorable 640
 Hou / that the seconde heeste / of hym / is this
 Take nat my name / in ydel or amys
 Lo rather he forbedeth swich sweryng^t
 Than homycide / or any cursed thyng^t 644
 I seye / that as by ordre / thus it stondesth
 This knowen / that hise heestes vnderstondesth
 How *pat* / the seconde heeste of god is that
 And forther ouer / I wol thee telle al plat^t 648
 That vengeance / shal nat *parten* from his hous
 That of hise othes / is to outrageous
 By goddes *precious* herte / and by his nayles
 And by the blood of Crist^t that is in Hayles 652
 Seuene is my chaunce / and thyn is cynk^t *and* treye
 By goddes *Armes* / if thou falsly pleye
 This daggere / shal thurg^h-out thyn herte go
 This fruyt cometh / of the biched bones two 656
 fforsweryng^t Ire / falsnesse / Homycide
 Now for the loue of Crist^t *pat* for vs dyde
 Lete youre othes / bothe grete and smale
 But sires / now wol I telle forth^h my tale 660
THise Riotours thre / of whiche I telle
 Longe erst^t er *prime* rong^t of any belle
 Were set hem / in a Tauerne to drynke
 And as they sat^t they herde a belle clynke 664
 Biforn a cors / was caried / to his graue
 That oon of hem / gan callen to his knaue
 Go bet quod he / and axe redily
 What cors is this / *pat* passeth heer forby 668

And looke / þat thou reporte his name weel
 ¶ Sire quod this boy / it nedeth neueradeel
 It was me toold / er ye cam heer two houres
 He was pardee / an old felawe of youres 672
 And sodeynly / he was yslayn to-nyght
 ffor-dronke / as he sat on his bench vpright
 Ther cam a priuce theef / men clepeth deeth
 That in this contree / al the peple sleeth 676
 And with his spere / he smoot his herte atwo
 And wente his wey / with-outen wordes mo
 He hath / a thousand slayn this pestilence
 And maister / er ye come in his presence 680
 Me thynketh / that it were necessarie
 ffor to be war / of swich an Aduersarie
 Beth redy / for to meete hym eueremoore
 Thus taughte me my dame / I sey namoore 684
 By seinte Marie seyde this Tauerner [leaf 144, back]
 The child seith sooth / for he hath slayn this yeer
 Henne ouer a Mile / with-Inne a greet village
 Bothe man and womman / child and hync / and page
 I trowe / his habitacion be there 689
 To been auysed / greet wysdom it were
 Er that he dide a man / a dishonour
 ¶ Ye goddes Armes / quod this Riotour 692
 Is it swich peril / with hym for to meete?
 I shal hym seke / by wey and cek by strete
 I make auow / to goddes digne bones
 Herkneth felawes / we thre been al ones 696
 Lat ech of vs / holde vp his hand til oother
 And ech of vs / bicomen otheres brother
 And we wol sleen / this false traytour deeth
 He shal be slayn / which þat so many sleeth 700
 By goddes dignitee / er it be nyght/
 ¶ Togidres han thise thre / hir trouthes plight
 To lyue and dyen / ech of hem for oother
 As though he were / his owene yborn brother 704

And vp they stirte / and dronken in this rage
 And forth they goon / towards that village
 Of which the Tauerner/ hadde spoke biforn
 And many a grisly ooth / thanne han they sworn 708
 And Cristes blessed body / they to-rente
 Deeth shal be deed / if that they may hym hente
 ¶ Whan they han goon / nat fully half a Mile
 Right as they wolde / han troden ouer a stile 712
 An oold man and a poure / with hem mette
 This olde man / ful mekely hem grette
 And seyde thus / now lordes / god yow see
 ¶ The proudeste / of this Riotours three 716
 Answerde agayn / what carl with sory grace
 Why artow / al forwrapped saue thy face?
 Why lyuestow so longe / in so greet age?
 ¶ This olde man / gan looke in his visage 720
 And seyde thus / for I ne kan nat fynde
 A man / though þat I walked in to ynde
 Neither in Citee / nor in no Village
 That wolde change / his youthe for myn Age 724
 And therefore / moot I han myn Age stille
 As longe tyme / as it is goddes wille
 ¶ Ne deeth allas / ne wol nat han my lyf
 Thus walke I / lyk a resteles kaityf 728
 And on the ground / which is my moodres gate
 I knobbe with my staf / bothe erly and late
 And seye / leeuwe mooder/ leet me In
 Lo how I vanysshē / flessħ and blood and skyn 732
 Allas / whan shul / my bones been at reste [leaf 145]
 Mooder / with yow / wolde I change my cheste
 That in my chambre / longe tyme hath be
 Ye for an heyre clowt to wrappe me 736
 But yet to me / she wol nat do that grace
 ffor which / ful pale / and welked is my face
 ¶ But sires to yow / it is no curteisye
 To speken / to an old man vileynye 740

- But he trespasse / in word / or elles in dede
 In hooly writ' ye may your self wel rede
 Agayns an oold man / hoor vpon his heed^{¶ coram canuto}
 Ye sholde arise / wherfore I yeue yow rec^{capite consurge}
 Ne dooth vn-to an oold man / noon harm now
 Namooore than þat ye wolde / men did to yow
 In age / if that ye so longe abyde
 And god be *with* yow / where ye go or ryde 748
 I moote go thider / as I haue to go
 ¶ Nay olde cherl / by god thou shalt nat so
 Seyde this oother hasardour anon
 Thou partest nat so lightly / by Seint Iohn 752
 Thou spak' right/ now / of thilke traytour deeth
 That in this contree / alle oure freendes sleeth
 Haue heer my trouthe / as thou art his espye
 Telle where he is / or thou shalt it abyde 756
 By god / and by the hooly sacrement'
 ffor soothly / thou art oon of his assent'
 To sleen vs yonge folk / thou false theef'
 ¶ Now sires quod he / if þat ye be so leef' 760
 To fynde deeth / turne vp this croked wey
 ffor in that groue / I lafte hym by my fey
 Vnder a tree / and there he wole abyde
 Noght for youre boost' he wole *him* no thyng hyde 764
 Se ye that ook' right there ye shal hym fynde
 God saue yow þat boghte agayn mankynde
 And yow amende / thus seyde this olde man
 And euerich / of these Riotours ran 768
 Til he cam to that tree / and ther they founde
 Of floryns fyne of gold[¶] ycoyned rounde
 Wel ny an .viij. busshels / as hem thoughte
 No lenger thanne / after deeth they soughte 772
 But ech of hem / so glád was of that sighte
 ffor þat the floryns / been so faire and brighte
 That down they sette hem / by this precious hoor[¶]
 The worste of hem / he spak the firste word[¶] 776

¶ Bretheren quod he / taak kepe what I seye
 My wit is greet though þat I bourde and pleye
 This tresor / hath ffortune vn-to vs yeuen
 In myrthe and Ioliftee / oure lyf to lyuen 780
 And lightly as it comth / so wol we spende [leaf 145, back]
 Ey goddes precious dignitee / who wende
 To-day / that we sholde han so fair a grace
 But myghite this gold / be caried fro this place 784
 Hoom to myn hous / or elles vn-to youres
 ffor wel ye woot þat al this gold is oures
 Thanne were we / in heigh felicitee
 But trewely / by daye it may nat bee 788
 Men wolde seyn / þat we were theues stronge
 And for oure owene tresor / doon vs honge
 This tresor / moste yearied be by nyghite
 As wisely / and as slyly / as it myghite 792
 Wherfore I rede / þat Cut among vs alle
 Be drawe / and lat se / wher the Cut wol falle
 And he þat hath the Cut with herte blithe
 Shal renne to towne / and that ful swithe 796
 And brynge vs breed and wyn / ful priuely
 And two of vs / shul kepen subtilly
 This tresor wel / and if he wol nat tarie
 Whan it is nyghit we wol this tresor carie 800
 By oon assent / where as vs thynketh best
 That oon of hem / the Cut broghite in his fest
 And bad hym drawe / and looke where it wol falle
 And it fil / on the yongeste of hem alle 804
 And forth toward the toun / he wente anon
 And al so soone / as that he was gon
 That oon spak thus / vn-to that oother
 Thow knowest wel / thou art my sworn brother 808
 Thy profit wol I telle thee anon
 Thou woost wel / that oure felawe is agon
 And heere is gold / and that ful greet plentee
 That shal departed been / among vs thre 812

But natheles / if I kan shape it so
 That it departed were / among vs two
 Hadde I nat doon / a freendes torn to thee?
 ¶ That oother answerde / I noot^t hou that may be 816
 He woot^t how that the gold is with vs tweye
 Wha[t sha]l we doon / what shal we to hym seye?
 ¶ Shal it be conseil / seyde the firste shrewe?
 And I shal tellen / in a wordes fewe 820
 What we shal doon / and bryngen it wel aboute
 ¶ I graunte quod that oother / out of doute
 That by my trouthe / I shal thee nat biwreye
 ¶ Now quod the firste / thou woost wel we be tweye 824
 And two of vs / shul strenger be than oon
 Looke whan þat he is set^t that right anon
 Arys / as thoughⁿ thou woldest^t with hym pleye
 And I shal / ryue hym / thurghⁿ the sydes tweye 828
 Whil that thou strogelest with hym / as in game [leaf 146]
 And with thy daggere / looke thou do the same
 And thanne / shal al this gold / departed be
 My deere freend^e / bitwixen me and thee 832
 Thanne may we / bothe oure lustes aH fulfille
 And pleye at dees / right at oure owene wille
 And thus / acorded been thise shrewes tweye
 To sleen the thridde / as ye han herd me seye 836
 ¶ This yongeste / which þat wente vn-to the toun
 fful ofte in herte / he rolleth vp and down
 The beautee of thise floryns / newe and brighte
 O lord quod he / if so were þat I myghte 840
 Haue al this tresor / to my self allone
 Ther is no man / þat lyueth vnder the trone
 Of god / that sholde lyue so murye as I
 And atte laste / the feend oure enemy 844
 Putte in his thought^t þat he sholde poyson beye
 With which / he myghte / sleen hise felawes tweye
 ffor why / the feend foond hym in swich luyunge
 That he hadde leue / hem to sorwe brynge 848

ffor this was outrely / his fulle entente
 To sleen hem bothe / and neuere to repente
 And forth he gooth / no lenger wolde he tarie
 Into the toun / vn-to Apothecarie 852
 And preyde hym / þat he hym wolde selle
 Som poyson / þat he myghite hise rattes quelle
 And eek ther was / a polcat in his hawe
 That as he seyde / hise capoñs hadde yslawe 856
 And fayn he wolde / wreke hym / if he myghite
 On vermyñ / þat destroyed hym by nyghite
 ¶ The Pothecarie answerde / and thou shalt haue
 A thyng that al so god my soule saue 860
 In al this world / ther is no creature
 That eten or dronken hath / of this confiture
 Noght / but the montance of a corn of whete
 That he ne shal / his lif anon forlete 864
 Ye sterue he shal / and that in lasse while
 Than thou wolt goon a paas / nat but A Mile
 This poysoñ / is so strong and violent
 ¶ This cursed man / hath in his hond yhent 868
 This poysoñ in a box / and sith he ran
 In-to the nexte strete / vn-to a man
 And borwed hym / large botels thre
 And in the two / his poyson poured he 872
 The thridde he kepte clene / for his owene drynke
 ffor al the nyght / he shoope hym for to swynke
 In carynge of the gold / out of that place
 And whan this Riotour / with sory grace 876
 Hadde filled with wyn / hise grete botels thre [leaf 146, back]
 To hise felawes / agayn repaireth he
 ¶ What nedeth it to sermone of it moore
 ffor right so / as they hadde cast his deeth bifoore 880
 Right so they han hym slayn / and that anon
 And whan þat this was doon / thus spak that oon
 Now lat vs sitte and drynke / and make vs merie
 And afterward / we wol his body berie 884

And with that word / it happed hym *par cas*
 To take the botel / ther the *poyson* was
 And drank' and yaf his felawe drynke also
 ffor which anon / they storuen bothe two 888
 ¶ But certes I suppose / that *Auycen*
 Wroot neuere in no Canon / ne in no fen
 Mo wonder signes / of empoisonyng'
 Than hadde these wrecches two / er hir endyng' 892
 Thus ended been / these homycides two
 And eek' the false empoysonere also
 ¶ O cursed synne / of alle cursednesse ¶ Auctor 896
 O traytours homicide .o. wikkednesse
 O glotonye / luxurie / and hasardrye
 Thou blasphemour of Crist' with vileynye
 And othes grete / of vsage / and of pride
 Allas mankynde / how may it bitide 900
 That to thy creatour / which þat the wroghte
 And with his *precious herte-blood* thee boghte
 Thou art so fals / and so vnkynde allas
 ¶ Now goode men / god foryeue yow youre trespas 904
 And ware yow / fro the synne of Auarice
 Myn hooly *pardoñ* / may yow alle warice
 So þat ye offre / nobles / or sterlynges
 Or elles siluer broches / spoones / rynges 908
 Boweth youre heed / vnder this hooly bulle
 Com vp ye wyues / offreth of youre wolle
 Youre names / I entre heer / in my rolle anon
 In-to the blisse of heueue / shul ye gon 912
 I yow assoille / by myn heigh power
 Yow þat wol offre / as elene and eek as cleer
 As ye were born / and lo sires thus I preche
 And *Ihesu crist* that is oure soules leche 916
 So graunte yow / his *pardoñ* to receyue
 ffor that is best' I wol yow nat' deceyue
But sires / o. word / forgat' I in my tale
 I haue Relikes / and *pardoñ* in my male 920


- As faire / as any man in Engelond
 Whiche were me yeuen / by the popes¹ hond^t [¹ half scratcht
 out of the MS]
 If any of yow / wole of deuocioñ
 Offren / and han myn Absolucioñ 924
 Com forth anon / and kneleth heere adoun [leaf 147]
 And mekely / receyueth my pardoun
 Or elles / taketh pardoñ / as ye wende
 Al newe and fressh / at euery Miles ende 928
 So þat ye offren / alwey newe and newe
 Nobles or pens / whiche þat be goode and trewe
 It is an honour / to euerich that is heer
 That ye mowe haue / a suffisant Pardonceer 932
 Tassoille yow / in contree as ye ryde
 ffor auentures / whiche þat may bityde
 Parauenture / ther may fallen / oon or two
 Doun of his hors / and breke his nekke atwo 936
 Looke which a seuretee / is it to yow alle
 That I am / in youre felaweshipe yfalle
 That may assoille yow / bothe moore and lasse
 Whan þat the soule / shal fro the body passe 940
 I rede / þat oure hoost heere shal bigynne
 ffor he is / moost enveloped in synne
 Com forth sire hoost^t and offre first anon
 And thou shalt kisse / my Relikes euerychon 944
 Ye for a grote / vnbokele anon thy purs
 Nay nay quod he / thanne haue I cristes curs
 Lat be quod he / it shal nat be so theeçh
 Thou woldest make me / kisse thyn olde breeçh 948
 And swere / it were a relyk^t of a seint^t
 Though it were / with thy fundement depeint^t
 But by the croys / which þat seint Eleyne fond² [² fond in a
 later hand]
 I wolde / I hadde / thy coillons in myn hond^t 952
 In stide of Relikes / or of seintuarie
 Lat kutte hem of / I wol with thee hem carie
 They shul be shryned / in an hogges toord^t
 ¶ This Pardoner / answerde nat a word^t 956

So wrooth he was / no word ne wolde he seye
 ¶ Now quod oure hoost' I wol no lenger pleye
 With thee / ne *wi*th noon oother angry man
 But right anon / the worthy knyght' bigan 960
 Whan þat he saugh / þat al the peple lough
 Namooore of this / for it is riht ynough
 Sire Pardoner / be glad and myrie of cheere
 And ye sir' hoost' þat been to me so deere 964
 I prey yow / þat ye kisse the Pardoner
 And Pardoner / I prey thee / drawe thee neer
 And as we diden / lat vs laughie and pleye
 Anon they kiste / and ryden forth hir weye 968

¶ Heere is ended the Pardoners tale 𐞂

GROUP B. (β. FRAGMENT III.)

§ 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

¶ Heere bigynneth the Shipmannes tale. 
[Elles. MS, lf 147, bk.]

A Marchant whilom dwelled at Seint Denys,
 That riche was / for which men helde hym wys
 A wyf he hadde / of excellent beautee [*Painting of
the Shipman,
on the left.*]
 And compaignable / and reuelous was she
 Which is a thyng^t that causeth more dispence
 Than worth is / al the chiere and reuerence 1196
 That men hem doon / at festes and at daunces
 Swiche salutacioñs / and contenaunces
 Passen / as dooth a shadwe vp on the wal
 But wo is hym / that payen moot for al 1200
 The sely housbonde / algate he moste paye
 He moot vs clothe / and he moot vs arraye
 Al for his owene worship^þ richely
 In which array / we daunce iolily 1204
 And if þat he noght may / par auenture
 Or ellis / list no swich dispence endure
 But thynketh / it is wasted / and ylost^t
 Thanne moot^t another / payen for oure cost^t 1208
 Or lene vs gold / and that is perilous
 ¶ This noble Marchañt^t heeld a worthy hous
 ffor which / he hadde alday so gret repair
 ffor his largesse / and for his wyf was fair 1212
 That wonder is / but herkneþ to my tale
 Amonges alle hise gestes / grete and smale
 Ther was a Monk^t a fair man and a boold^t
 I trowe of thrity wynter he was oold^t 1216
 That euere in oon / was comynge to that place
 This yonge Monk / þat was so fair of face

- Aqueynted was so / with the goode man
 Sith that / hir firste knoweliche bigan 1220
 That in his hous / as famulier was he
 As it possible / any freend to be
 ¶ And for as muchel / as this goode man
 And eek this Monk' of which þat I bigan 1224
 Were bothe two / yborn in o village
 The Monk / hym claymeth / as for cosynage
 And he agayn / he seith nat ones nay
 But was as glad ther-of / as fowel of day 1228
 ffor to his herte / it was a greet plesaunce
 Thus been they knyht' with eterne alliaunce
 And ech of hem / gan oother for tassure
 Of bretherhede / whil þat hir lyf may dure 1232
 ¶ ffree was Daun Iohn and namely of dispence [leaf 148]
 As in that hous / and ful of diligence
 To doon plesaunce / and also greet costage
 He noght' forgaht' to yeue the leeste page 1236
 In al the hous / but after hir degree
 He yaf the lord / and sitthe al his meynce
 Whan that he cam / som manere honest thyng'
 ffor which / they were as glad of his comyng' 1240
 As fowel is fayn / whan þat the sonne vp riseth
 Na moore of this as now / for it suffiseth
But so bifel / this Marchant on a day
 Shooþ hym / to make redy his array 1244
 Toward / the toun of Brugges for to fare
 To byen there / a porcion of ware
 ffor which / he hath to Parys sent anon
 A Messenger / and preyed hath daun Iohn 1248
 That he sholde come / to Seint Denys to pleye
 With hym and with his wyf / a day or tweye
 Er he to Brugges wente / in alle wise
 ¶ This noble Monk' of which I yow deuysel 1252
 Hath of his Abbot' as hym list licence
 By cause / he was a man / of heigh prudence

And eek^t an Officer / out for to ryde
 To seen hir graunges / and hire bernes wyde 1256
 And vn-to Seint Denys / he comth anon
 Who was so welcome / as my lord Daun Iohn
 Oure deere cosyn / ful of curteisye
 With hym broghte he a Iubbe of Malucesye 1260
 And eek another / ful of fyn vernage
 And volatyl / as ay was his vsage
 And thus / I lete hem drynke and pleye
 This Marchant^t and this Monk^t a day or tweye 1264
 ¶ The thridde day / this Marchant vp ariseth
 And on hise nedes / sadly hym auyseth
 And vp / in to his Countour hous gooth he
 To rekene *wit*h hym self / wel may be 1268
 Of thilke yeer / how þat it with hym stood
 And how þat he / despended hadde his good
 And if þat he / encessed were or noon
 Hise bookes / and his bagges many oon 1272
 He leith biforn hym / on his countyng^t bord^t
 fful riche / was his tresor and his hord^t
 ffor which ful faste / his Countour dore he shette
 And eek he nolde / þat no man sholde hym lette 1276
 Of hise accountes / for the meene tyme
 And thus he sit^t til it was passed pryme
 ¶ Daun Iohn was rysen / in the morwe also
 And in the gardyn / walketh to and fro 1280
 And hath hise thynges seyde / ful curteisly [leaf 148, back]
 ¶ This goode wyf^t cam walkynge pryuely
 In to the gardyn / there he walketh softe
 And hym saleweth / as she hath doon ofte 1284
 A mayde child / cam in hire compaignye
 Which as hir list^t she may gouerne and gye
 ffor yet^t vnder the yerde was the mayde
 O deere cosyn myn / daun Iohn she sayde 1288
 What eyleth yow / so rathe for to ryse
 ¶ Nece quod he / it oghte ynough suffise

ffyue houres for to slepe / vp on a nyght
 But it were / for an old appalled wight 1292
 As been thise wedded men / þat lye and dare
 As in a fourme / sit a wery hare
 Were al forstraught / with houndes grete and smale
 But deere Nece / why be ye so pale 1296
 I trowe certes / that oure goode man
 Hath yow laboured / sith the nyght bigan
 That yow were nede / to resten hastily
 And with that word / he lough ful murily 1300
 And of his owene thought he wax al reed
 ¶ This faire wyf gan for to shake hir heed
 And seyde thus / ye god woot al quod she
 Nay nay cosyn myn / it stant nat so with me 1304
 ffor by that god / that yaf me soule and lyf/
 In al the Reawme of ffrance / is ther no wyf
 That lasse lust hath / to that sory pley
 ffor I may synge / allas and weylawey 1308
 That I was born / but to no wight quod she
 Dar I nat telle / how that it stant with me
 Wherefore I thynke / out of this land to wende
 Or elles / of my self to make an ende 1312
 So ful am I / of drede / and eek of care
 ¶ This Monk bigan vp on this wyf to stare
 And / seyde / Allas my Nece god forbede
 That ye / for any sorwe / or any drede 1316
 ffordo youre self / but tel me of youre grief
 Paraventure / I yow may / in youre meschief
 Conseille or helpe / and therfore telleth me
 All youre any / for it shal been secree 1320
 ffor on my porthors / I make an ooth
 That neuere in my lyf / for lief ne looth
 Ne shal I / of no conseil yow biwreye
 ¶ The same agayn / to yow quod she I seye 1324
 By god / and by this Porthors I yow swere
 Though men me wolde / al in to pieces tere

Ne shal I neuere / for to goon to helle
 Biwreye a word / of thyng' þat ye me telle 1328
 Nat for no cosyng' / ne alliance [leaf 119]
 But verrailly / for loue and affiance
 Thus been they sworn / and heer vpon they kiste
 And ech of hem / tolde oother what hem liste 1332
 ¶ Cosyn quod she / if þat I hadde a space
 As I haue noon / and namely in this place
 Thanne wolde I telle / a legende of my lyf
 What I haue suffred / sith I was a wyf 1336
 With myn housbonde / al be he of youre kyn
 ¶ Nay quod this Monk' by god / and by seint Martyn
 He is / na moore cosyn vn-to me
 Than is this lief' þat hangeth on the tree 1340
 I clepe hym so / by Seint Denys of ffrance
 To haue / the moore cause of Aqueyntaunce
 Of yow / which I haue loued specially
 Abouen alle wommen sikerly 1344
 This swere I yow / on my profession
 Telleth youre grief / lest þat he come adoun
 And hasteth yow / and gooth youre wey anon
 ¶ My deere loue quod she / o my daun Iohn 1348
 fful lief were me / this conseil for to hyde
 But out it' moot' I may namoore abyde
 Myn housbonde / is to me the worste man
 That euere was / sith þat the world bigan 1352
 But sith I am a wyf' it sit nat me
 To tellen no wig'ht / of oure priuetece
 Neither a bedde / ne in noon oother place
 God shilde / I sholde it tellen for his grace 1356
 A wyf / ne shal nat seyn of hir housbonde
 But al honour / as I kan vnderstonde
 Saue vn to yow / thus muche I tellen shal
 As helpe me god / he is nog'ht worth at al 1360
 In no degree / the value of a flye
 But yet' me greueth moost' his nygardye

And wel ye woot^t þat wommen naturelly
 Desiren thynges sixe / as wel as I 1364
 They wolde / that^t hir housbondes sholde be
 Hardy *and* wise / and riche *and* ther-to free
 And buxom vn to his wyf^t and fressh^h abedde
 But by that ilke lord / that for vs bledde 1368
 ffor his honour / my self for to arraye
 A sonday next^t I moste nedes paye
 An hundred frankes / or ellis I am lorn
 Yet were me leuere / that I were vnborn 1372
 Than me were doon / a selaundre or vileynye
 And if myn housbonde / eek it myghte espye
 I nere but lost^t and therefore I yow preye
 Lene me this somme / or ellis moot I deye 1376
 Daun Iohn I seye / lene me thise hundred frankes [ff 149, bk.]
 Pardee / I wol nat faille yow my thanks
 If that yow list^t to doon that I yow praye
 ffor at a certeyn day / I wol yow paye 1380
 And doon to yow / what plesance and seruice
 That I may doon / right as yow list devise
 And but I do / god take on me vengeance
 As foul / as euere hadde Genylow of ffrance 1384
 ¶ This gentil Monk / answerde in this manere
 Now trewely / myn owene lady deere
 I haue quod he / on yow so greet a routhe
 That I yow swere / and plighte yow my trouthe 1388
 That whan youre housbonde / is to fflaundes fare
 I wol delyuere yow / out of this care
 ffor I wol brynge yow / an hundred frankes
 And *with* that word / he caughte hire by the flankes 1392
 And hire embraceth harde / and kiste hire ofte
 Gooth now youre wey quod he / al stille *and* softe
 And lat us dyne / as soone as þat ye may
 ffor by my chilyndre / it is pryme of day 1396
 Gooth now / and beeth as trewe as I shal be
 ¶ Now elles / god forbede sire quod she

And forth she gooth / as Iolif as a pye
 And bad the cookes / þat they sholde hem hye 1400
 So þat men mygh̄te dyne / and that anon
 Vp to hir housbonde / is this wyf ygon
 And knokketh / at his Countour boldely
 ¶ Who ther? quod he / Peter it am I. ¶ qi la?
 Quod she / what sire / how longe wol ye faste?
 How longe tyme / wol ye rekene and caste?
 Youre sommes / and youre bookes / and youre thynges?
 The deuel haue part' on alle swiche rekenynges 1408
 Ye haue ynough̄ pardee / of goddes sonde
 Com down to day / and lat youre bagges stonde
 Ne be ye nat ashamed that Daun Iohn
 Shal fasting' al this day alenge goon 1412
 Lat vs heere a messe / and go we dyne
 ¶ Wyf quod this man / litel kanstow deuyne
 The curious bisynesse / that we haue
 ffor of vs Chapmen / al so god me saue 1416
 And by that lord / þat clepid is Scint' Yve
 Scarsly amonges .xij. ten shul thryue
 Continuelly / lastynge vn to oure age
 We may wel / make chiere / and good visage 1420
 And dryue forth the world / as it may be
 And kepen / oure estaat' in pryuetee
 Til we be deed / or elles that we pleye
 A pilgrymage / or goon out of the weye 1424
 And therefore / haue I greet necessitee [leaf 150]
 Vp on this queynte world tauyse me
 ffor eueremoore / we moote stonde in drede
 Of haþ and ffortune / in oure chapmanhede 1428
 ¶ To fflaundes / wol I go / to morwe at day
 And come agayn / as soone as euere I may
 ffor which my deere wyf I thee biseke
 As be to euery wigh̄t' buxom and meke 1432
 And for to kepe oure good / be curious
 And honestly / gouerne wel oure hous

Thou hast ynough / in euery maner wise
 That / to a thrifty houshold may suffise 1436
 Thee lakketh noon array / ne no vitaille
 Of siluer in thy purs / shaltow nat faille
 And with that word / his Countour dore he shette
 And doun he gooth / no lenger wolde he lette 1440
 But hastily / a messe was ther seyð
 And spedily / the tables were yleyð
 And to the dyner / faste they hem spedde
 And richely / this Monk / the chapman fedde 1444
 ¶ At after dyner / daun Ioñn sobrelly
 This Chapman took^t a-part^t and priuely
 He seyde hym thus / cosyn it standeth so
 That wel I se / to Brugges / wol ye go 1448
 God and seint Austyn / spede yow and gyde
 I prey yow cosyn / wisely that ye ryde
 Gouverneth yow also / of youre diete
 Atemprelly / and namely in this hete 1452
 Bitwix vs two / nedeth no strange fare
 ffare wel cosyn / god shilde yow fro care
 And if þat any thyng^t by day or nyght^t
 If it lye in my power / and my myght^t 1456
 That ye me wol comande in any wyse
 It shal be doon / right as ye wol deuyse
 ¶ O thyng^t er þat ye goon / if it may be
 I wolde prey yow / for to lene me 1460
 An hundred frankes / for a wyke or tweye
 ffor *certein* beestes / þat I moste beye
 To stoore with a place þat is oures
 God helpe me so / I wolde it were youre 1464
 I shal nat faille / surely at my day
 Nat for a thousand^d frankes a Mile way
 But lat this thyng be secree / I yow preye
 ffor yet to nyght^t / thise beestes moot I beye 1468
 And fare now wel / myn owene cosyn deere
 Graunt mercy / of youre cost^t / and of youre cheere

- ¶ This noble marchant / gentilly anon
 Answerde / and seyde o cosyn myn Daun Ioĥn 1472
 Now sikerly / this is a smal requeste [leaf 150, back]
 My gold is youres / whan þat it yow leste
 And nat oonly my gold / but my chaffare
 Take what yow list god shilde þat ye spare 1476
- ¶ But o thyng is / ye knowe it wel ynogh
 Of Chapmen / that hir moneie is hir plogh
 We may creauunce / whil we haue a name
 But goldlees for to be / it is no game 1480
 Paye it agayn / whan it lith in youre ese
 After my myghȝt / ful fayn wolde I yow plese
- ¶ These hundred frankes / he fette hym forth anon
 And priuely / he took hem to daun Ioĥn 1484
 No wight in al this world / wiste of this loone
 Sauynge this Marchant / and daun Ioĥn alloone
 They drynke / and speke / and rome a while *and* pleye
 Til þat daun Ioĥn / rideth to his Abbeye 1488
- T**he morwe cam / and forth this Marchant rideth
 To fflaundes ward / his prentys wel hym gydeth
 Til he cam / in to Brugges murily
 Now gooth this Marchant faste and bisily 1492
 Aboute his nede / and byeth and creauunceth
 He neither / pleyeth at dees ne daunceth
 But as a Marchant shortly for to telle
 He let his lyf / and there I lete hym dwelle 1496
- T**he sonday next this Marchant was agon
 To saint Denys / yeomen is Daun Ioĥn
 With crowne and berde all fressh and newe y-shaue
 In al the hous / ther nas so litel a knaue 1500
 Ne no wight elles / þat he nas ful fayn
 That my lord Daun Ioĥn / was come agayn
 And shortly / right to the point for to gon
 This faire wyf accorded with daun Ioĥn 1504
 That for these hundred frankes / he sholde al nyghȝt
 Haue hire in hise armes / bolt upright

And this acord / parfourned was in dede
 In myrthe al nyght a bisy lyf they lede 1508
 Til it was day / þat Daun Ioĥn wente his way
 And bad the meynee / fare wel haue good day
 ffor noon of hem / ne no wight in the toun
 Hath of daun Ioĥn / right no suspecioun 1512
 And forth he rydeth / hoom to his Abbeye
 Or where hym list. namoore of hym I seye
This Marchant whan þat ended was the faire
 To Seint Denys / he gan for to repaire 1516
 And with his wyf he maketh feeste and cheere
 And telleth hire / that Chaffare is so decre
 That nedes / moste he make a cheuyssañce
 ffor he was bounden / in a reconyssañce 1520
 To paye twenty thousand sheeld anon [leaf 151]
 ffor which / this Marchant is to Parys gon
 To borwe / of certeine freendes þat he hadde
 A certeyn frankes / and somme with him he ladde 1524
 And whan þat he was come / in to the toun
 ffor greet chiertee / and greet affectioun
 Vn to daun Ioĥn / he gooth hym first to pleye
 Nat for to axe / or borwe of hym moneye 1528
 But for to wite / and seen of his welfare
 And for to tellen hym / of his chaffare
 As freendes doon / whan they been met yfeere
 Daun Ioĥn / hym maketh feeste and murye cheere 1532
 And he hym tolde agayn / ful specially
 How he hadde wel ybogh't and graciously
 Thanked be god / al hool his marchandise
 Saue þat he moste / in alle maner wise 1536
 Maken a cheuyssañce / as for his beste
 And thanne / he sholde been / in ioye and reste
 ¶ Daun Ioĥn answerde / certes I am fayn
 That ye in heele / ar comen hom agayn 1540
 And if þat I were riche / as haue I blisse
 Of twenty thousand sheeld / shold ye nat mysse

ffor ye / so kyndely / this oother day
 Lente me gold / and as I kan and may 1544
 I thanke yow / by god and by seint Iame
 But nathelees / I took vn to oure dame
 Youre wyf / at hom / the same gold ageyn
 Vpon youre bench / she woot it wel certeyn 1548
 By *certeyn* tokenes / that I kan yow telle
 Now by youre leue / I may no lenger dwelle
 Oure Abbot wole out of this toun anon
 And in his compaignye / moot I goon 1552
 Grete wel oure dame / myn owene Nece sweete
 And fare wel deere cosyn / til we meete
This Marchant which þat was ful war *and* wys
 Creanced hath / and payd eek in Parys 1556
 To certeyn lumbardes / redy in hir hond
 The *somme* of gold / and hadde of hem his bond^{.i. obligacionem}
 And hoom he gooth / murie / as a Papeiay
 ffor wel he knew / he stood in swich array 1560
 That nedes moste he wyne in that viage
 A thousand frankes / abouen al his costage
 ¶ His wyf ful redy / mette hym atte gate
 As she was wont of oold vsage algate 1564
 And al that nyght in myrthe they bisette
 ffor he was riche / and cleerly out of dette
 Whan it was day / this Marchant gan embrace
 His wyf / al newe / and kiste hire on hir face 1568
 And vp he gooth / and maketh it ful tough^[leaf 151, back]
 ¶ Namooore quod she / by god ye haue ynough
 And wantownely agayn / *with* hym she pleyde
 ¶ Til atte laste / this Marchant seyde 1572
 By god quod he / I am a litel wrooth
 With yow my wyf / al-though^h it were me looth
 And woot ye why / by god as þat I gesse
 That ye han maad / a manere straungenesse 1576
 Bitwixen me / and my cosyn daun Iohn
 Ye sholde han warned me / er I had gon

That he yow hadde / an hundred frankes payed
 By redy tokene / and heeld hym yuele apayed 1580
 ffor þat I to hym spak of cheuyssañce
 Me semed so / as by his contenañce
 But natheles / by god oure heuene kyng'
 I thoughte nat' to axen hym no thyng' 1584
 I prey thee wyf / as do namoore so
 Telle me alwey / er that I fro thee go
 If any dettour / hath in myn absence
 Ypayed thee / lest thurgh thy necligence 1588
 I mygh̄te hym axe / a thing that he hath payed
 ¶ This wyf' was nat afered nor affrayed
 But boldely she seyde / and that anon
 Marie / I deffie / the false Monk / daun Iohn 1592
 I kepe nat of hise tokenes / neuer a deel
 He took me certeyn gold / that woot I wee
 What yuel thedam / on his Monkes snowte
 ffor god it woot' I wende withouten doute 1596
 That he hadde yeue it me / bycause of yow
 To doon ther-with / myn honour and my prow
 ffor cosynage / and eek for beele cheere
 That he hath had / ful ofte tymes heere 1600
 But sith I se / I stonde in this disioynt'
 I wol answeere yow / shortly to the poynt'
 ¶ Ye han mo slakkere dettours / than am I
 ffor I wol paye yow / wel and redily 1604
 ffor day to day / and if so be I faille
 I am youre wyf' score it vp-on my taille
 And I shal paye / as soone as euer I may
 ffor by my trouthe / I haue on myn array 1608
 And nat on wast' bistowed euery deel
 And for I haue / bistowed it so weel
 ffor youre honour / for goddes sake I seye
 As be nat wrooth / but lat vs laugh̄e and pleye 1612
 Ye shal / my ioly body / haue to wedde
 By god I wol nat paye yow but a bedde

fforgyue it me / myn owene spouse deere
 Turne hiderward / and maketh bettre cheere 1616
 ¶ This Marchant saugh / ther was no remedie [leaf 152]
 And for to chide / it nere but greet folie
 Sith that the thyng^t may nat amended be
 Now wyf he seyde / and I foryeue it thee 1620
 But by thy lyf^t ne be namoore so large
 Keepe bet^t oure good / that yeue I thee in charge
 Thus endeth my tale / and god vs sende
 Taillynge ynough / vn-to oure lyues ende Amen 1624

¶ Heere endeth / the Shipmannes tale 1624

¶ Bihoolð the murie wordes of the Hoost' to the
Shipman and to the lady Prioresse. [on leaf 152]

Wel seyð by corpus dominus quod our Hoost'
Now longe / moote thou saille by the cost'
Sire gentil maister / gentil Maryneer
God yeue this Monk / a thousand' last' quade yeer 1628
A ha felawes / beth ware of swiche a Iape
The Monk' putte / in the mannes hood an Ape
And in his wyues eek' by Seint Austyn
Draweth no Monkes / moore vn to youre In 1632
¶ But now passe ouer / and lat vs seke aboute
Who shal now / telle first' of al this route
Another tale / and *with* that word he sayde
As curteisly / as it had ben a mayde 1636
My lady Prioresse / by youre leue
So that I wiste / I sholde yow nat greue
I wolde demen / that ye tellen sholde
A tale next' if so were that ye wolde 1640
Now wol ye vouche sauf' my lady deere
¶ Gladly quod she / and seyde as ye shal heere

¶ Explicit. 𐄂

¶ The prologe of the Prioresses tale.  [on leaf 152]

Domine dominus noster.

O lord oure lord / thy name how merueillous
 Is in this large world / ysprad quod she
 ffor noght oonly / thy laude precious
 Parfourned is / by men of dignitee 1646
 But by the mouth of children / thy bountee
 Parfourned is / for on the brest soukyng
 Somtyme / shewen they thyn heriyng 1649

Wherfore in laude / as I best kan or may [leaf 152, back]
 Of thee / and of the lylye flour
 Which that the bar / and is a mayde alway
 To telle a storie / I wol do my labour 1653
 Nat that I may / encreessen hir honour
 ffor she hir self / is honour and the roote
 Of bountee next hir sone / and soules boote 1656

O mooder mayde / o mayde mooder fre
 O busshe vnbrent brennyng in Moyses sighte
 That rauyseedest down fro the deitee
 Thurghe thyn humblesse / the goost þat in thalighte 1660
 Of whos vertu / whan he thyn herte lighte
 Conceyued was / the fadres sapience
 Helpe me / to telle it in thy reuerence 1663

Lady / thy bountee / thy magnificence
 Thy vertu / and thy grete humylitee
 Ther may no tonge expresse / in no science
 ffor somtyme lady / er men praye to thee 1667
 Thou goost biforn / of thy benyngnytee
 And getest vs / thurghe lyght of thy preyere
 To gyden vs / vn to thy sone so decre 1670

My konnyng^t is so wayk^t o blisful queene
 ffor to declare / thy grete worthynesse
 That I ne may / the weighte nat susteene
 But as a child / of twelf / monthe oold or lesso 1674
 That kan vnnethe / any word expresse
 Right so fare I / and therefore I yow preye
 Gydeth my song^t þat I shal of yow seye 1677

¶ Explicit 𐀚

¶ Heere bigynneth the Prioresses tale.

Ther was in Aseye / in a greet Citee [Painting of
the Prioress
on the left]
 Amonges cristene folk / a Iewerye
 Sustened / by a lord / of that contree
 ffor foule vsure / and lucre of vileynye ¶ *turpe lucrum* . .
 Hateful / to Crist^t and to his compaignye
 And thurgh^h the strete / men mygh^te ride or wende
 ffor it was free / and open at eyther ende 1684

A litel scole / of cristen folk^t ther stood^t [leaf 153]
 Doun at the ferther ende / in which ther were
 Children an heepe / ycomen of cristen blood^t
 That lerned in that scole / yeer by yere 1688
 Swich manere doctrine / as men vsed there
 This is to seyn / to syngen / and to rede
 As smale children doon / in hire childhede 1691

Among^t thise children / was a wydwes sone
 A litel clergeonⁿ / seuen yeer of age
 That day by day / to scole was his wone
 And eek also / where as he saugh^h thymage 1695
 Of Cristes mooder he hadde in vsage
 As hym was taught^t to knele adoun and seye
 His Aue Marie / as he goth by the weye 1698

Thus hath this wydwe / hir litel sone ytaught
 Oure blisful lady cristes mooder deere
 To worshipe ay / and he forgate it naught
 ffor sely child / wol alday soone leere 1702
 But ay / whan I remembre on this mateere
 Seint Nicholas / stant euere in my presence
 ffor he so yong' to Crist' dide reuerence 1705

This litel child' his litel book' lernynge
 As he sat in the scole / at his prymer
 He / Alma redemptoris / herde synge
 As children / lerned hire Anthiphoner 1709
 And as he dorste / he drough hym ner and ner
 And herkned ay / the wordes and the noote
 Til he the firste vers / koude al by rote 1712

Noght wiste he / what this latyn was to seye
 ffor he so yong' and tendre was of age
 But on a day / his felawe gan he preye
 Texpounden hym this song' in his langage 1716
 Or telle hym / why this song' was in vsage
 This preyde he hym / to construe and declare
 fful often tyme / vpon hise knowes bare 1719

His felawe / which that elder was than he
 Answerde hym thus / this song I haue herd seye
 Was maked / of oure blisful lady free
 Hire to salue / and eek hire for to preye 1723
 To been oure help / and socour whan we deye
 I kan na moore / expounde in this mateere
 I lerne song' I kan but smal grammeere 1726

¶ And is this song' maked in reuerence [leaf 153, back]
 Of cristes mooder' seyde / this Innocent'
 Now certes / I wol do my diligence
 To konne it al / er Cristemasse is went' 1730

Though þat / I for my prymer shal be shent^r
 And shal be beten / thries in an houre
 I wol it konne / oure lady for to honoure 1733

His felawe / taughte hym homward priuely
 ffro day to day / til he koude it by rote
 And thanne / he song^r it wel and boldely
 ffro word to word^r to word^r acordynge with the note 1737
 Twies a day / it passed thurgh^r his throte
 To scoleward^r and homward whan he wente
 On cristes mooder / set was his entente 1740

¶ As I haue seyde / thurgh^r out the Iuerie
 This litel child^r / as he cam to and fro
 fful murily / wolde he synge and crie
 O Alma redemptoris / euere mo 1744
 The swetnesse / his herte perced so
 Of cristes mooder / that to hire to preye
 He kan nat stynte / of syngyng^r by the weye 1747

Ovre firste foo / the serpent Sathanas
 That hath / in Iues herte his waspes nest^r ¶ Auctor
 Vp swal / and seide / o. hebrayk^r pple allas
 Is this to yow / a thyng^r þat is honest^r 1751
 That swich a boy / shal walken as hym lest^r
 In youre despit^r and synge of swich sentence
 Which is / agayn oure lawes reuerence 1754

ffro thennes forth / the Iues han conspired
 This Innocent^r out of this world to chace
 An homicide / ther to / han they hyred
 That in an Aleye / hadde a priuce place 1758
 And as the child^r / gan forby for to pace
 This cursed Iew hym hente / and heeld hym faste
 And kitte his throte / and in a pit hym caste 1761

I seye / that in a wardrobe / they hym threwe
 Where as thise Iewes / purgen hire entraille
 O cursed folk / of Herodes al newe
 What may youre yuel entente yow auaille 1765
 Mordre wol out^t certeyn / it wol nat faille
 And namely / ther thonour of god shal sprede
 The blood out crieth / on youre cursed dede 1768

¶ O martir / sowded to virginitee [leaf 154]
 Now maystow syngen / folwyng eue in oon
 The white lamb celestial quod she
 Of which / the grete Euaungelist^t Saint Iohn 1772
 In Pathmos wroot^t which seith / þat they þat goon
 Biforn this lamb / and synge a song al newe
 That neuere fleshly / wommen they ne knewe 1775
i. carnaliter

¶ This poure wydwe / awaiteth al that nyght^t
 After hir litel child / but he cam noght^t
 ffor which as soone / as it was dayes lyght^t
 With face pale of drede / and bisy thoght^t 1779
 She hath at scole / and elles where hym soght^t
 Til finally / she gan so fer espie
 That he / last seyn was in the Iuerie 1782

With moodres pitee / in hir brest^t enclosed
 She gooth / as she were half / out of hir mynde
 To euery place / where she hath supposed
 By liklihedde / hir litel child to fynde 1786
 And euere / on Cristes mooder/ meeke and kynde
 She cride / and atte laste / thus she wroghte
 Among^t the cursed Iues / she hym soghte 1789

She frayneth / and she preyeth pitously
 To euery Iew / þat dwelte in thilke place
 To telle hire / if hir child / wente oght^t forby
 They seyde nay / but Ihesu of his grace 1793

Yaf in hir thoght inwith a litel space
 That in that place / after hir sone she cryde
 Where he was casten / in a pit bisyde 1796

O grete god / that parfournest thy laude ¶ Auctor
 By mouth of Innocentz / lo heere thy myght'
 This gemme of chastite / this Emeraude
 And eek of martirdom / the Ruby bright' 1800
 Ther he with throte ykoruen lay vpright'
 He Alma redemptoris / gan to synge
 So loude / þat al the place gan to ryng 1803

¶ The cristene folk / that thurgh the strete wente
 In coomen / for to wondre vp on this thyng'
 And hastily / they for the Prouost sente
 He cam anon / with outen tariyng' 1807
 And herieth Crist' that is of heuene kyng'
 And eek his mooder / honour of mankynde
 And after that / the Iewes leet he bynde 1810

¶ This child / with pitous lamentacioñ [leaf 154, back]
 Vp taken was / syngyng his song alway
 And with honour / of greet processioñ
 They carien hym / vn to the nexte Abbay 1814
 His mooder swownyng / by his beere lay
 Vnnethe / myghte the peple þat was there
 This newe Rachel / bryng fro his beere 1817

¶ With torment' and wifz shameful deeth echon
 This Prouost' dooth the Iewes for to sterue
 That of this mordre wiste / and that anon
 He nolde / no swich cursednesse obseruē 1821
 Yuele shal he haue / þat yuele wol deserue
 Therefore / with wilde hors / he dide hem drawe
 And after that' he heng hem by the lawe 1824

¶ Vp on this beere / ay·lith this Innocent'
 Biforn the chief Auter / whil the masse laste
 And after that the Abbot with his Couent'
 Han sped hem / for to burien hym ful faste 1828
 And whan they / hooly water on hym caste
 Yet spak this child / whan spreynd was hooly water
 And song' O Alma redemptoris mater. 1831

¶ This Abbot which þat was an hooly man
 As Monkes been / or elles oghte be
 This yonge child / to coniure he bigan
 And seyde o deere child I halsen thee 1835
 In vertu / of the hooly Trinitee
 Tel me / what is thy cause / for to synge
 Sith þat thy throte is kut' to my semyng 1838

¶ My throte is kut' vn to my nekke boon
 Seyde this child and as by wey of kynde
 I sholde haue dyed / ye longe tyme agon
 But Ihesu crist / as ye in bookes fynde 1842
 Wil þat his glorie / laste / and be in mynde
 And for the worship / of his mooder deere
 Yet may I synge / O Alma / loude and cleere 1845

¶ This welle of mercy Cristes mooder sweete
 I loued alwey / as after my konnyng
 And whan þat I my lyf / sholde forlete
 To me she cam / and bad me for to synge 1849
 This Anthephen / verrailly / in my deyyng
 As ye han herd / and whan þat I hadde songe
 Me thoughte / she leyde a greyn vp on my tonge 1852

Wherfore I synge / and synge I moot certeyn [leaf 155]
 In honour / of that blisful mayden free
 Til fro my tonge / of taken is the greyn
 And afterward / thus seyde she to me 1856

My litel child / now wol I fecche thee
 Whan þat the greyn / is fro thy tonge ytake
 Be nat agast I wol thee nat forsake 1859

¶ This hooly Monk this Abbot hym meene I
 His tonge out caughte / and took a-wey the greyn
 And he yaf vp the goost ful softly
 And whan this Abbot hadde this wonder seyn 1863
 Hise salte teeris / triked down as reyn
 And gruf he fil / al plat vp on the grounde
 And stille he lay / as he had leyn ybounde 1866

The Couent' eek / lay on the pauement
 Wepyng / and heryen cristes mooder deere
 And after that / they ryse and forth been went
 And taken away / this martir from his beere 1870
 And in a temple / of Marbul stones cleere
 Enclosen they / his litel body sweete
 Ther he is now / god leue us alle for to meete 1873

¶ O yonge Hugh of Lyncoln slayn also
 With cursed Iewes / as it is notable
 ffor it is / but a litel while ago
 Preye eek / for vs / we synful folk vnstable 1877
 That of his mercy / god so merciabie
 On vs / his grete mercy multiplie
 ffor reuerence / of his mooder Marie Amen 𐀀 1880

¶ Heere is ended / the Prioresses Tale 𐀀

¶ Bihooold the murye wordes of the Hoost^t to

Chaucer 𐄂

[on leaf 155]

W

Han seyð was al this miracle / euery man
 As sobre was / that wonder was to se
 Til that oure hoost^t Iapen to bigan

And thanne at erst^t he looked vp on me 1884

And seyde thus / what man artow quod he ?

Thou lookest^t as thou woldest fynde an hare

ffor euere / vp on the ground^t / I se thee stare 1887

Approche neer / and looke vp murily

[leaf 155, back]

Now war yow sires / and lat this man haue place

He in the waast^t is shape / as wel as .I.

.i. henry Baillly

This were a popet^t in an Arm tenbrace

1891

ffor any womman smal / and fair of face

He semeth eluysshⁿ / by his contenañce

ffor vn to no wight^t / dooth he daliañce 1894

Sey now somewhat^t syn oother folk^t han sayd^t

Telle vs a tale / of myrthe / and that anon

Hoost^t quod I / ne beth nat yuele apayd^t

ffor oother tale / certes kan I noon

1898

But of a rym / I lerned longe agoon

Ye that is good quod he / now shul ye heere

Som deyntee thynge^t me thynketh by his cheere 1901

¶ Explicit 𐄂

¶ Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Thopas. [on leaf
155, lk]

[*The First Fit.*]

[*Each third line is on the right of its couple, in the MS.*]

- L**isteth lordes in good entent^t
 And I wol telle verrayment^t
 Of myrthe and of solas 1904
 Al of a knyght / was fair and gent^t
 In bataille / and in tourneyment^t
 His name was sire Thopas 1907
- ¶ Yborn he was / in fer contree
 In flaundes / al biyonde the see
 At Poperyng^t in the place 1910
 His fader was / a man ful free
 And lord he was / of that contree
 As it was goddes grace 1913
- ¶ Sire Thopas / wax a doghty swayn
 Whit was his face as Payndemayn
 Hise lippes rede as rose 1916
 His rode is lyk / scarlet in grayn
 And I yow telle / in good certayn
 He hadde / a semely nose 1919
- ¶ His heer / his berd^t / was lyk saffroun
 That to his girdel raughite adoun
 Hise shoos of Cordéwane 1922
 Of Brugges / were his hosen broun
 His Robe / was of Syklatoun
 That coste many a Iane 1925

- ¶ He koude hunte / at wilde deer
 And ride an haukyng^t for Riuer
 With grey goshawk on honde 1928
 Ther-to he was / a good Archeer
 Of wrastlyng^t was ther noon his peer
 Ther any Ram shal stonde 1931
- ¶ fful many a mayde / bright in bour
 They moorne for hym *paramour*
 Whan hem were bet to slepe 1934
 But he was chaast^t and no lechour
 And sweete as is the Brembul flour
 That bereth the rede hepe 1937
- And so bifel vp on a day
 ffor sothe / as I yow telle may
 Sire Thopas / wolde out ride 1940
 He worth / vpon his steede gray
 And in his hand a launcegay
 A long swerd / by his side 1943
- ¶ He priketh / thurg^h a fair forest^t [leaf 156]
 Ther Inne / is many a wilde best^t
 Ye bothe bukke and hare 1946
 And as he priketh North *and* Est^t
 I telle it yow / hym hadde almost^t
 Bitidde / a sory care 1949
- ¶ Ther spryngen herbes / grete *and* smale
 The lycorys and Cetewale
 And many a clowe gylofre 1952
 And Notemuge / to putte in Ale
 Wheither it be moyste / or stale
 Or for to leye in cofre 1955

- ¶ The briddes synge / it is no nay
 The *spar*hauk' and the papeiay
 That ioye it was to heere 1958
- The thrustelcok / made eek hir lay
 The wodedowue / vp on a spray
 She sang' ful loude *and* cleere 1961
- ¶ Sire Thopas fil in loue longynge
 Al whan he herde / the thrustel synge
 And pryked / as he were wood^þ 1964
- His faire steede in his prikyng
 So swatte / þat men myghte *him* wryng
 His sydes / were al blood^þ 1967
- ¶ Sire Thopas eek / so wery was
 ffor prikyng' on the softe gras
 So fiers was his corage 1970
- That doun he leyde *him* in that plas
 To make his steede som solas
 And yaf hym good forage 1973
- ¶ O seinte Marie benedicite
 What eyleth / this loue at me
 To bynde me so soore 1976
- Me dremed / al this nyght' *par*dee
 An elf queene / shal my lemman be
 And slepe vnder my goore 1979
- ¶ An Elf queene / wol I loue ywis
 ffor in this world / no womman is
 Worthy to be my make[?] 1982
 In' towne
- ¶ Alle othere wommen I forsake
 And to an Elf queene I me take
 By dale *and* eek by downe 1986

- ¶ In to his sadel / he clamb anon
 And priketh ouer stile and stoon
 An Elf queene for tespye 1989
 Til he so longe / hadde riden and goon
 That he foond / in a pryue woon
 The contree of ffairye 1992
 so wilde
 ffor in that contree was ther noon?
 [. *no gap in the MS.*]
 Neither wyf ne childe 1996
- ¶ Til þat ther cam a greet geaunt
 His name was / sire Olifaunt
 A perilous man of dede 1999
 He seyde child by Termagaunt /
 But if thou prike / out of myn haunt
 Anon I sle thy steede 2002
 with mace
- ¶ Heere is / the queene of ffairye
 With harpe / and pipe and symphonye
 Dwellynge in this place 2006
- ¶ The child seyde / Al so moote I thee
 Tomorwe / wol I meete *with* thee
 Whan I haue myn Armour 2009
- ¶ And yet I hope / *par* ma fay
 That thou shalt *with* this launcegay
 Abyen it ful sowre 2012
 Thy mawe
- Thyn hauberk / shal I percen / if I may¹ [*all over an erasure*]
 Er it be fully pryme of day
 ffor heere thow shalt be slawe 2016

- ¶ Sire Thopas / drow abak ful faste
 This geant' at hym stones caste
 Out of a fel staf slynge 2019
- ¶ But faire escapeth sire Thopas
 And al it was thurgh' goddes gras
 And thurgh' his fair berynge 2022
- Y**et listeth / lordes / to my tale [leaf 156, back]
 Murier than the Nightyngale
 I wol yow rowne 2025
- How sir Thopas / with sydes smale
 Prikyng' ouer hiH and dale
 Is comen agayn to towne 2028
- ¶ His murie men / comanded he
 To make hym / bothe game and glee
 ffor nedes / moste he fighte 2031
- With a geant' with heucdes three
 ffor *paramour* and Iolitee
 Of oon / that shoon ful brighte 2034
- ¶ Do come he seyde / my Mynstrales
 And geestours / for to tellen tales
 Anon in myn Armynge 2037
- Of Romances / that been Roiales
 Of Popes / and of Cardinales
 And eek' of loue likyng 2040
- ¶ They sette hym first' sweete wyn
 And Mede eek' in a Mazelyn
 And Roial spicerye 2043
- And Gyngebreod / þat was ful fyn
 And lycorys and eek Comyn
 With sugre þat is so trye 2046

- ¶ He dide / next his white leere
 Of clooth of lake / fyn and cleere
 A breech / and eek a sherte 2049
 And next his sherte an Aketoñ
 And ouer that' an haubergeoñ
 ffor Percyng of his herte 2052
- ¶ And ouer that / a fyn hawberk'
 Was al ywroght of Iewes werk'
 fful strong it was of plate 2055
 And ouer that' his cote Armour
 As whit' as is / a lilye flour
 In which / he wol debate 2058
- ¶ His sheeld / was al / of gold so reed'
 And ther Inne / was a bores heed'
 A Charbocle bisyde 2061
 And there he swoor / on ale and breed'
 How þat the geaunt' shal be deed'
 Bityde what bityde 2064
- ¶ Hise Iambeux were of quyrboilly
 His swerdes shethe of Yuory
 His helm of laton bright' 2067
 His sadel was of Rewel boon
 His brydel / as the sonne shoon
 Or as the moone light' 2070
- ¶ His spere it was / of fyn Ciprees
 That bodeth werre / and no thyng' pees
 The heed / ful sharpe ygrounde 2073
 ¶ His steede was / al dappuñ gray
 It gooth an Ambil in the way
 fful softly and rounde 2076

In londe

¶ Loo lordes myne / heere is a fit
 If ye wol any moore of it
 To telle it / wol I fonde 2080

[*The Second Fit.*]

NOw holde youre mouth *par charitee*
 Bothe knyght and lady free
 And herkneth to my spelle 2083

¶ Of batailles / and of Chialry
 And of ladyes / loue drury
 Anon I wol yow telle 2086

¶ Men speken of Romances of prys
 Of Hornchild and of Ypotys
 Of Beves and of *sir Gy* 2089
 Of *sir lybeux* and pleyn *damour*
 But *sir Thopas* / he bereth the *flour*
 Of Roial Chialry 2092

¶ His goode Steede / al he bistrood
 And forth / vpon his wey he rood
 As sparele / out of the bronde 2095

¶ Vp on his Creest He bar a tour [leaf 157]
 And ther Inne / stiked a lilie flour
 God shilde his cors fro shonde 2098

¶ And for he was / a knyght Auntrous
 He nolde slepen / in noon hous
 But ligen in his hode 2101

¶ His brighte helm / was his wonger
 And by hym / baiteth his dextrer
 Of herbes fyne and goode 2104


¶ Hym self / drank water of the weH

As dide the knyght sire PercyueH

So worly vnder wede

¶ Til on a day

2108

¶ Heere the Hoost^t stynteth Chaucer / of his tale of
Thopas 

Na moore of this / for goddes dignitee
Quod oure hoost^t for thou makest me
So wery / of thy verray lewednesse
That also wisly / god my soule blesse 2112
Min eres aken / of thy drasty speche
Now swich a Rym / the deuel I biteche
This may wel / be Rym dogerel quod he
¶ Why so quod I / why wiltow lette me? 2116
Moore of my tale / than another man
Syn that it is / the beste tale I kan
¶ By god quod he / for pleynly at a word^t
Thy drasty rymyng / is nat worth a toord^t 2120
Thou doost^t noght elles / but despendest tyme
Sire at o word / thou shalt no lenger ryme
Lat se / wher thou kanst tellen aught in geeste
Or telle in prose / somewhat at the leeste 2124
In which ther be som murthe / or som doctryne
¶ Gladly quod I / by goddes sweete pyne
I wol yow telle / a litel thyng in prose
That oghte liken yow / as I suppose 2128
Or elles *certes* / ye been to daungerous
It is a moral tale vertuous
Al be it take somtyme / in sondry wyse
Of sondry folk^t as I shal yow deuyse 2132
¶ As thus / ye woot^t þat euery Euaungelist/
That telleth vs / the peyne of Ihesu crist^t
Ne seith nat alle thyng^t as his felawe dooth^h
But natheles / hir sentence is al sooth^h 2136
And alle acorden / as in hire sentence
Al be ther / in hir tellyng^t difference

ffor somme of hem seyn moore / and somme seyn lesse
 Whan they / his pitoune expresse 2140
 I meene / of Mark Mathew / Luc and Iohn
 But douteles / hir sentence is all oon
 ¶ Therfore lordynges alle / I yow biseche [leaf 157, back]
 If þat yow thynke / I varie as in my speche 2144
 As thus / though that I telle som what moore
 Of prouerbes / than ye han herd bifoore
 Comprehended / in this litel tretys heere
 To enforce with / theeffect of my mateere 2148
 And though I / nat the same wordes seye
 As ye han herd / yet to yow alle I preye
 Blameth me nat for as in my sentence
 Shul ye / nowher / fynden difference 2152
 fro the sentence / of this tretys lyte
 After the which / this murye tale I write
 And therefore / herkneth / what þat I shal seye
 And lat me tellen / al my tale I preye 2156

¶ Explicit 

[There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrwhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines. ¶ stands for a triangular pause-mark in the MS.]

[Ellesmere MS, on leaf 157, back.]

[Painting of Chaucer on horseback.]

¶ Heere bigynneth Chaucers tale of Melibee ¶
 [2157]
 Yong man called Melibeus myghty and riche /
 bigat vp on his wyf that called was Prudence / a
 doghter which that called was Sophie /
 [2158] Vpon a day bifel þat he / for his desport/
 is went in to the feeldes hym to pleye / [2159] his wyf /
 and eek his doghter / hath he left inwith his hous / of
 which the dores / weren fast yshette [2160] ¶ thre of hise
 olde foes / han it espyed and setten laddres / to the walles
 of his hous / and by wyndowes been entred / [2161] and
 betten his wyf / and wounded his doghter with fyue
 mortal woundes in fyue sondry places [2162] ¶ this is to
 seyn / in hir feet. in hire handes /. in hir erys /. in hir
 nose /. and in hire mouth and leften hire for deed / and
 wenten away

[2163] ¶ Whan Melibeus / retourned was in to his
 hous / and saugh al this meschief he lyk a mad man
 rentynge his clothes / gan to wepe and crie

[2164] ¶ Prudence his wyf / as ferforth as she dorste /
 bisoghte hym / of his wepyng for to stynte / [2165] but nat
 for-thy / he gan to crie and wepen euere lenger the moore

[2166] ¶ This noble wyf Prudence / remembred hire /
 vpon the sentence of Ouide / in his book / that cleped is the
 remedie of loue ¶ where as he seith / [2167] he is a fool /
 that destourbeth the mooder to wepen in the deeth of hire
 child / til she haue wept hir fille / as for a certein tyme
 [2168] ¶ And thanne / shal man doon his diligence with
 amiable wordes / hire to reconforte / and preyen hire of

¶ Ouidius / de
 remedio amoris.

hir wepyng^t for to stynte [2169] ¶ ffor which resoñ this noble wyf Prudence / suffred hir housbonde for to wepe and crie / as for a certein space /. [2170] And whan she saugh hir tyme / she seyde hym in this wise ¶ Allas / my lord quod she / why make ye youre self^t for to be lyk^t a fool / [2171] for sothe / it aperteneth nat to a wys man / to maken swiche a sorwe / [2172] youre ¹ doghter / with the grace of god shal warisshe and escape / [2173] And al were it so / that she right now were deed ? ye ne oughte nat^t as for hir deeth youre self to destroye [2174] ¶ Senek^t seith / the wise man / shal nat take to greet discomfort^t for the deeth of his children / [2175] but certes / he sholde suffren it in pacience / as wel / as he / abideth the deeth / of his owene. propre persone

¶ Seneca

[2176] ¶ This Melibeus / answerde anon and seyde ¶ What^t man quod he sholde of his wepyng stente / that hath so greet a cause for to wepe ? [2177] Ihesu crist^t oure lord hym self wepte for the deeth of Lazarus hys freend^t [2178] ¶ Prudence answerde ||. Certes wel I woot || Attempree wepyng^t is no thyng deffended to hym þat sorweful is amonges folk in sorwe / but it is rather graunted hym to wepe [2179] ¶ The Apostle Paul vn-to the Romayns writeth || Man shal reioyse with hem that maken ioye and wepen / with swich folk as wepen [2180] ¶ But though attemptree wepyng be ygraunted / outrageous wepyng^t certes is deffended / [2181] Mesure of wepyng^t sholde be considered / after the loore þat techeth us Senek^t [2182] ¶ Whan that thy frend is deed quod he / lat nat thyne eyen to moyste been of teeris / ne to mucche drye / Al though the teeris come to thyne eyen / lat^t hem nat falle / [2183] And whan thou hast for-goon thy freend^t / do diligence to gete another freend^t / and this is moore wysdom / than for to wepe for thy freend^t which that thou hast lorn / for ther-Inne is no boote / [2184] And therefore / if ye gouerne yow by sapiencie / put away sorwe / out of youre herte [2185] ¶ Remembre yow / þat Ihesus Syrak^t seith

¶ Melibeus

¶ Qualiter Ihesus christus fleuit propter mor,em lazari

¶ Prudence

¶ Apostolus Paulus ad Romanos

¶ Seneca

¶ Ihesus Syrak

¶ A man that is ioyous and glad in herte / it hym conserueth florissynge in his age / But soothly / sorweful herte / maketh hise bones drye [2186] ¶ He seith eek / thus / That sorwe in herte / sleeth ful many a man [2187] ¶ Salomon seith / That right as Motthes in the shepes flees / anyoeth to the clothes / and the smale wormes to the tree / right so anyoeth sorwe to the herte / [2188] wherfore / vs oghte as wel in the deeth of oure children / as in the losse of opere goodes temporels haue pacience

¶ Salomon

¶ Memorandum
de Iob

[2189] ¶ Remembre yow vp on the pacient Iob / whan he hadde lost his children and his temporeel substance / and in his body endured and receyued ful many a greuous tribulacion: yet seyde he thus [2190] ¶ Oure lord / [*le m'a donné; nostre Seigneur*] hath biraft it me / right as oure lord hath wold / right so it is doon / blessed be the name of oure lord [2191] ¶ To thise foreseide

¶ Melibeus

thynges / answerde Melibeus / vn to his wyf Prudence ¶ Alle thy wordes quod he been sothe / and therwith profitable / but trewely / myn herte is troubled with this sorwe so greuously / that I noot what to doone [2192] ¶ Lat calle quod Prudence thy trewe freendes alle / and thy lynage / whiche that been wise / telleth youre cas / and herketh what they seye in conseillyng and yow gouerne after hire sentence [2193] ¶ Salomon seith / werk alle thy thynges by conseil / and thou shalt neuer repente

¶ Prudence

¶ Salomon

[2194] ¶ Thanne by the conseil of his wyf Prudence / this Melibeus / leet callen a greet congregacion of folk. [2195] as surgiens / Phisiciens olde folk and yonge / and somme of hise olde enemys reconciled as by hir semblaunt to his loue / and in to his grace / [2196] and ther-with-al / ther coomen somme of hise neighebores / that diden hym reuerence / moore for drede than for loue / as it happeth ofte / [2197] ¶ Ther coomen also / ful many subtille flatereres and wise Aduocatz lerned in the lawe /

[2198] And whan this folk / togidre assembled weren / this Melibeus in sorweful wise / shewed hem his cas /

[2199] and by the manere of his ¹speche / it semed wel /
 that in herte / he baar a cruuel Ire / redy to doon venge-
 añce vp on hise foes / and sodeynly desired / that the
 werre sholde bigynne / [2200] but^t natheles / yet axed he
 hire conseil vpon this matiere [2201] ¶ A Surgien by
 licence and assent^t of swiche as weren wise / vp roos / and
 to Melibeus / seyde / as ye may heere .

[2202] ¶ Sire quod he / as to vs Surgiens aperteneth /
 that we do to euery wight^t the beste that we kan / where as
 we been withholde / and to oure pacientz that we do no
 damage / [2203] wherfore it happeth many tyme and ofte /
 that whan twey men / han euerich wounded oother / oon
 same surgien heeeth hem bothe / [2204] wherfore / vn to
 oure Art^t it is nat pertinent^t to norice werre ne parties
 to supporte ||. [2205] But certes / as to the warisshyng of
 youre doghter / al be it so / that she perilously be
 wounded / we shullen do so ententif bisynesse fro day to
 nyght^t that with the grace of god / she shal be hool and
 sound / as soone as is possible [2206] ¶ Almost / right
 in the same wise / the Phisiciens answerden / saue that
 they seyden / a fewe woordes moore / [2207] That right
 as maladies / been cured by hir contraries || right so / shul
 men warisshe werre by vengeañce [2208] ¶ Hise neighe-
 bores ful of enuye / hise feyned freendes that semeden
 reconciled / and hise flatereres / [2209] maden semblant^t
 of wepyng^t and empeireden and agreggeden muchel of this
 matiere in preisyng greetly Melibee / of myght / of power /
 of richesse / and of freendes despisyng / the power of hise
 Aduersaries / [2210] and seiden outrely that he anon
 sholde wrenken hym on hise foes and bigynne werre

[2211] ¶ Vp roos thanne an Aduocat^t that was wys /
 by leue and by conseil of othere that were wise / and seide ||.
 [2212] Lordynges / the nede for which we been assembled^t
 in this place / is a ful heuy thyng^t and an heigh matiere /
 [2213] by cause of the wrong^t and of the wikkednesse that
 hath be doon / and eek by resoñ of the grete damages that

in tyme comynge / been possible to fallen for this same
 cause / [2214] and eek' by resoñ of the grete richesse and
 power of the parties bothe / [2215] for the whiche resoñs /
 it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matiere [2216]
 ¶ wherfore / Melibeus this is oure sentence / we conseil-
 le yow abouen alle thyng'. that right anon / thou do thy
 diligence in kepyng of thy propre persone / in swich a
 wise þat thou wante noon espie / ne wacche / thy persone
 for to saue [2217] ¶ And after that we conseil-
 le þat in thyn hous / thou sette sufficeant garnisoñ so that they may /
 as wel thy body as thyn hous defende [2218] ¶ But certes /
 for to moeue werre / or sodeynly for to doon vengeance /
 we may nat demen / in so litel tyme / that it were profit-
 able /. [2219] Wherfore we axen leyser and espace / to haue
 deliberacion in this cas to deme / [2220] ffor the commune
 prouerbe seith thus ¶ He that soone deemeth. soone shal
 repente [2221] And eek' men seyn / that thilke Iuge is
 wys that soone vnderstondeth a matiere and Iuggeth by
 leyser [2222] ¶ for al be it so that alle tariyng be anoyful /
 algates / it is nat to repreue in yeuyng of Iuggement' ne in
 vengeance takyng' whan it is sufficeant' and resonable
 [2223] ¶ And that shewed oure lord Ihesu crist by en-
 sample / for whan that the womman / that was taken in
 Auowtrie was broght in his presence / to knowen / what
 sholde be doon with hire persone / al be it so that he wiste
 wel hym self / what that he wolde answe're / yet ne wolde he
 nat answe're sodeynly / but he wolde haue deliberacion / and
 in the ground' he wroot' twies / [2224] and by thise
 causes / we axen deliberacion / and we shal thanne by
 the grace of god / conseil-
 le thee thyng / that shal be
 profitable /

[2225] ¶ Vp stirten thanne / the yonge folk atones /
 and the mooste partie of that compaignye scorned the olde
 wise men and bigonnen to make noyse / and seyden / that
 [2226] right so / as whil that Iren is hoot' men sholden
 smyte / right so / men sholde wreken hir wronges / while

¶ Nota de
 Iudiciis &
 eorum Iudiciis

þat they been fresshe and newe / and with loud voys / they
criden werre / werre

[2227] ¶ Vp roos tho / oon of thise olde wise / and
with his hand made contenaunce / that men sholde
holden hem stille and yeuen hym Audience [2228]

¶ Lordynges quod he / ther is ful many a man / that
crieth werre werre / that woot ful litel what werre

amounteth [2229] ¶ werre at his bigynnyng^t hath so greet
an entryng^t and so large / that euery wigh^t may entre
whan hym liketh / and lightly fynde werre / [2230] but

certes / what ende that shal ther-of bifalle / it is nat light
to knowe || [2231] ffor soothly / whan þat werre is ones

bigonne / ther is ful many a child vnborn of his mooder /
that shal sterue yong^t by cause of that ilke werre / or elles

lyue in sorwe / and dye in wrecchednesse ||. [2232] And
ther fore / er þat any werre bigynne / men moste haue

greet conseil and greet^t deliberacion [2233] ¶ And whan
this olde man / wende / to enforen his tale by resons /

wel ny alle atones / bigonne they to rise for to breken his
tale / and beden hym ful ofte / hise wordes for to abregge /

[2234] ffor soothly / he that precheth to hem / that listen
nat heeren hise wordes / his *sermon* hem anoieth [2235]

¶ ffor Ihesus Syrak seith / that Musik^t in wepyng^e is
anoymous thyng||. this is to seyn || As muche auailleth to

¶ Ihesus
Syrak /

speken bifore folk / to whiche his speche anoyeth / as it is
to syng^e / biforn hym that wepeth ||. [2236] And this wise

man / saugh that hym wanted audience / and al shamefast^t
he sette hym doun agayn [2237] ¶ ffor Salomon seith || ther

¶ Salomon

as thou ne mayst haue noon Audience / enforce thee nat
to speke [2238] ¶ I see wel quod this wise man / þat the

commune prouerbe is sooth || That good conseil wanteth /
whan it is moost [nede]

[2239] ¶ Yet hadde this Melibeus in his conseil / many
folk that priuely in his eere consealed hym *certeyn* thyng^t.
and consealed hym the contrarie in general Audience

[2240] Whan Melibeus hadde herd / that the gretteste ¶ Melibeus

- partie of his conseil / weren accorded þat he sholde maken werre / anoon / he consented to hir conseillyng^t and fully affermed hire sentence / [2241] Thanne dame Prudence / whan þat she saugh / how that hir housbonde shoope hym for to wreken hym on hise foes / and to bigynne werre / she in ful humble wise / whan she saugh hir tyme / seide to hym these wordes [2242] ¶ My lord quod she / I yow biseche as hertely as I dar and kan / ne haste yow nat to faste / and for alle gerdons / as yeueth me Audience [2243] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonse seith ¶ who so that dooth to that oother good or harm / haste thee nat^t to quiten it^t. for in this wise thy freend wole abyde / and thyn enemy shal the lenger lyue in drede [2244] ¶ The prouerbe seith ¶ he hasteth wel that wisely kan abyde ¶ And in wikked haste / is no profit^t
- ¶ Melibee [2245] This Melibee answerde vn to his wyf Prudence ¶ I purpose nat quod he to werke by thy conseil / for many causes and resoñs ¶ ffor certes / euery wight wolde holde me thanne a fool [2246] ¶ this is to seyn / If I. for thy conseillyng^t wolde chaungen thynges that been ordeyned and affermed by so manye wyse [2247] ¶ Secoundly I seye / that alle wommen been wikke / and noon good of hem alle ¶ ffor of a thousand men seith Salomon / I foond a good man ¹but certes of alle wommen / good womman foond I neuere [2248] ¶ And also certes / If I gouerned me by thy conseil / it sholde seme that I hadde yeue to thee ouer me the maistrie / and god forbede / that it so were [2249] ¶ For Ihesus Syrak seith / that if the wyf haue maistrie / she is contrarious to hir housbonde [2250] ¶ And Salomon seith ¶ Neuere in thy lyf / to thy wyf / ne to thy child^t / ne to thy freend / ne yeue no power ouer thy self ¶. ffor bettre it were / that thy children aske of thy persone / thynges that hem nedeth / than thou be thy self^t in the handes of thy children / [2251] ¶ And if I wolde werke by thy conseillyng^ts Certes / my conseillyng^t moste som tyme be secree / til it were tyme þat it moste be

knowe and this / ne may noght be [2252. *Car il est
escript, la genglerie des femmes ne puct riens celler fors ce
qu'elle ne scet.* [2253] *Après, le philosopfre dit, en mauvais
conseil les femmes vainquent les hommes: et par ces raisons
je ne dois point user de ton conseil.* MS Reg. 19 C. vii, in
Tyrwhitt, iv. 335. (*See Prudence on Reasons 4 & 5, further on.*)

[2254] Whanne dame Prudence / ful debonairly and ¶ Prudence
with greet pacience / hadde herd / al that hir housbonde
liked for to seye / thanne axed she of hym licence for to
speke / and seyde in this wise [2255] ¶ My lord quod she /
as to youre firste resoñ / certes it may lightly been
answered ¶ ffor I seye / that it is no folie / to chaunge
conseil ¶. whan the thyng is changed ¶ or elles / whan
the thyng semeth / ootherweyes / than it was biforn
[2256] ¶ And mooreouer I seye / that though ye han
sworn and bihight to perfourne youre emprise ¶ And
natheles / ye weyue to perfourne / thilke same emprise
by Iuste cause / men sholde nat seyn therfore / that ye were
a lier ne forsworn [2257] ¶ ffor the book seith / þat the
wise man maketh no lesyng whan he turneth his corage to
the bettre [2258] ¶ And al be it so / that youre emprise be
establißed and ordeyned / by greet multitude of folk / yet
thar ye nat accomplice thilke ordinañce / but yow like
[2259] ¶ ffor the trouthe of thynges / and the profit been
rather founden in fewe folk that been wise / and ful of
resoñ / than by greet multitude of folk ther euery man
crieth and clatereth / what that hym liketh ¶ Soothly /
swich multitude is nat honeste [2260] ¶ As to the seconde
resoñ /. where as ye seyn þat alle wommen been wikke ?
Saue youre grace / certes ye despisen alle wommen in this
wyse / [*car il est escript, qui tout desprist, a tous desplait*]
[2261] & Senecæ seith / that who so wole haue sapi- ¶ Seneca
ence / shal no man despise but he shal gladly / tochen the
science that he kan with-outen presumpcion or pride /
[2262] And swiche thynges // as he nought ne kan / he
shal nat been ashamed to lerne hem and enquire of lasse

folk / than hym self /. [2263] And sire / that ther hath
 been many a good womman / may lightly be preued /
 [2264] ¶ ffor *certes* sire / oure lord Ihesu crist' wolde
 neuere haue descended to be born of a womman / if alle
 wommen / hadden ben wikke / [2265] And after that for
 the grete bountee that is in wommen oure lord Ihesu crist'
 whan he was risen fro deeth to lyue / appeered rather to a
 womman / than to hise Apostles [2266] ¶ And though
 that salomon seith / that he ne foond neuere womman
 good / it folweth nat therefore / that alle wommen ben
 wikke [2267] ffor though that he ne foond no good
 womman /. *certes* ful many another man / hath founden /
 many a womman ful good and trewe [2268] ¶ Or elles
per auenture / the entente of salomon was this / that as in
souereyn bounte he foond no womman / [2269] this is to
 seyn / that ther is no wight þat hath *souereyn bounte* /
 saue god allone / as he hym self recordeth in hys Euang-
 gelie / [2270] ffor ther nys no creature so good / that hym
 ne wanteth somewhat of the *perfeccioñ* of god / that is his
 maker' [2271] ¶ Your'e ¹thridde reson is this ¶ ye seyn / if
 ye gouerne yow by my conseil / it' sholde seme that ye
 hadde yeue me the maistrie / and the lordshipe ouer your'e
persone ||. [2272] sire saue your'e grace / it is nat so || ffor
 if it were so that no man sholde be conseyllid / but oonly
 of hem that hadden lordshipe and maistrie of his *persone* /
 men wolden nat be conseyllid so ofte || [2273] ffor soothly /
 thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos / yet hath he
 free choys / wheither he wole werke by that conseil or
 noon [2274] ¶ And as to your'e fourthe resoñ ¶ ther ye
 seyn þat the Ianglerie of wommen hath hyd thynges that
 they wiste noght'. As who seith / that a womman kan nat
 hyde that she woot [2275] ¶ sire these wordes been vnder-
 stonde of wommen þat been Iangleresses and wikked /
 [2276] of whiche wommen / men seyn that thre thynges /
 dryuen a man out of his hous ¶ that is to seyn Smoke /
 droppynge of Reyn /. and wikked wyues / [2277] and

¶ Of .iiij. thynges
 þat dryuen a man
 out of his hous.

swiche wommen seith Salomon / þat it were better dwelle ¶ Salomon
 in desert than with a womman that is riotous [2278] ¶ And
 sire by youre leue / that am nat .I. / [2279] for ye haan ful
 ofte assayed my grete silence / and my gret pacience. || And
 eek how wel / that I kan hyde and hele thynges / that
 men ogh̄te secreely to hyde [2280] ¶ And soothly / as to
 youre fifthe resoñ / where as ye seyn / that in wikked con-
 seil / wommen venquiss̄ie men ¶ god woot thilke resoñ
 stant heere in no stede [2281] ¶ ffor vnderstood now / ye
 asken conseil to do wikkednesse / [2282] and if ye wole
 werken wikkednesse / and youre wif restreyneth thilke
 wikked purpos / and ouercometh yow by resoñ and by
 good conseil / [2283] certes youre wyf ogh̄te rather to be
 preised / than yblamed [2284] ¶ Thus sholde ye vnder-
 stonde the Philosophre / that seith / In wikked conseil
 wommen venquiss̄ien hir housbondes [2285] ¶ And ther
 as ye blamen alle wommen and hir resoñs || I shal shewe
 yow by manye ensamples / that many a womman / hath
 ben ful good / and yet been / and hir conseils ful hoolsome
 and profitable [2286] ¶ Eek som men han seyde that the
 conseillynge of wommen / is outh̄er to deere / or elles to
 litel of pris [2287] ¶ But al be it so / þat ful many a
 womman is badde / and hir conseil vile and noght worth /
 yet han men founde / ful many a good womman / and ful
 discrete and wise in conseillynge [2288] ¶ Loo Iacob / by
 good conseil of his mooder Rebekka wan the benyson of
 Ysaak / his fader / and the lordshipe ouer alle hise bretheren
 [2289] ¶ Iudith by hire good conseil deliuered the Citee of
 Bethulie in which she dwelled / out of the handes of
 Olofernus / that hadde it biseged and wolde haue al destroyed
 it [2290] ¶ Abygail deliuered Naþal hir housbonde fro
 Daud the kyng that wolde haue slayn hym / and apaysed
 the Ire of the kyng by hir wit and by hir good conseil-
 lyng [2291] ¶ Hester / enhaunced greetly by hir good con-
 seil the peple of god / in the regne of Assuerus the kyng
 [2292] ¶ and the same bountee in good conseillyng of

¶ Nota de
Rebekka

¶ de Iudith

¶ de Abygail

¶ de Hestere

many a good womman may men telle [2293] ¶ And moore
ouer/ whan oure lord hadde creat Adam oure forme fader /
he seyde in this wise / [2294] It is nat good / to been a
man alloone / make we to hym an helpe semblable to hym
self / [2295] ¶ Heere may ye se / that if that wommen
were nat goode and hir conseils goode & profitable /
[2296] oure lord god of heuene / wolde neuere han wroght
hem / ne called hem / help of man but rather confusioñ of
man [2297] ¶ And ther seyde oones a clerk in ¹two vers ||
what is bettre / than gold ? Iaspre ¶ What is bettre than
Iaspre ? wisdom / [2298] ¶ And what is better than
wisdom ? womman ||. And what is bettre than a good
womman? no thyng [2299] ¶ And sire by manye of othre
resons / may ye seen that manye wommen been goode /
and hir conseils goode and profitable || [2300] And therefore
sire / if ye wol triste to my conseil / I shal restooore yow /
youre doghter / hool and sound / [2301] And eek/.I. wol do
to yow so muche / that ye shul haue honour in this cause /

¶ Melibee

[2302] Whan Melibee hadde herd the wordes of his
wyf Prudence / he seyde thus [2303] ¶ I se wel that the

¶ Salomon

word of Salomon is sooth ||. he seith that wordes þat
been spoken discretly by ordinaunce / been honycombes /
for they yeuen swetnesse to the soule / and hoolsomnesse
to the body [2304] ¶ And wyf / by cause of thy sweete
wordes / and eek for I haue assayed and preued thy grete
sapience / and thy grete trouthe / I wol gouerne me by thy
conseil / in alle thyng /

¶ Prudence

[2305] Now sire quod dame Prudence / and syn ye
vouche sauf / to been gouerned by my conseil / I wol
enforme yow / how ye shul gouerne youre self/ in chesyng
of youre conseilours [2306] ¶ Ye shul first/ in alle youre
werkes / mekely / biseken to the heighe god / þat he wol
be youre conseilour /. [2307] And shapeth yow / to swich
entente / that he yeue yow conseil and confort as taughte

¶ Thobias

Thobie his sone [2308] ¶ At alle tymes / thou shalt blesse

god and praye hym / to dresse thy weyes / and looke / þat
 alle thy conseils been in hym for eueremoore [2309] Seint
 lame eek' seith ||. If any of yow haue nede of sapience / axe
 it of god [2310] ¶ And afterward / thanne shul ye taken
 conseil of youre [self] and examyne wel youre thoghtes / of
 swich thyng' as yow thynketh þat is best for youre profit /
 [2311] And thanne shul ye dryue fro youre herte. thre
 thynges that been contrariouse to good conseil / [2312]
 That is to seyn / Ire / coueitise / and hastifnesse

¶ Sanctus
 Iacobus

¶ Of .iij. thynges
 þat been contrariouse
 to good conseil

[2313] ¶ ffirst' he þat axeth conseil of hym self / certes /
 he moste been with-outen Ire / for manye causes / [2314]
 the firste is this ¶ he þat hath greet Ire and wratthe in
 hym self / he weneþ alwey that he may do thyng' that he
 may nat do [2315] ¶ And secoundely / he that is Irous
 and wrooth / he ne may nat wel deme / [2316] and he
 þat may nat wel deme / may nat wel consaille [2317] ¶ The
 thridde is this / that he þat is Irous and wrooth as seith
 Senec' ne may nat speke / but he blame thynges / [2318]
 and with hise viciouse wordes / he stireth oother folk / to
 Angre and to Ire [2319] ¶ And eek sire / ye moste dryue
 coueitise out of youre herte / [2320] ffor the Apostle seith
 ¶ That coueitise is roote of alle harmes || [2321] And trust'
 wel / that a coueitous man ne kan noght deme ne thynke /
 but oonly to fulfille the ende of his coueitise / [2322] and
 certes / that ne may neuere been accompliced / for euere /
 the moore habundaunce þat he hath of richesse / the moore
 he desireth [2323] ¶ And sire / ye moste also / dryue out
 of youre herte hastifnesse / for certes / [2324] ye ne may
 nat deeme for the beste a sodeyn thought / that falleth in
 youre herte / but ye moste auyse yow on it' ful ofte /
 [2325] ffor as ye herde biforn / The commune prouerbe is
 this ¶ That he þat soone deemeth / soone repenteth.

¶ Seneca

¶ Apostolus

[2326] ¶ Sire / ye ne be nat alwey in lyke disposicioñ
 [2327] for certes / som thyng' þat somtyme semeth to
 yow / that it' is good for to do / Another tyme it semeth
 to yow the contrarie /

[2328] whan ye han taken conseil of youre self / and han deemed by good deliberacion swich thyng/ as you list best/ [2329] ¶ Thanne rede I yow / that ye kepe it/ 'secree / [2330] biwrey nat youre conseil to no persone / but if so be that ye wenen sikerly / that thurgh youre biwreyng' youre condicioñ / shal be to yow the moore profitable [2331] ¶ ffor Ihesus Syrak seith / Neither to thy foo ne to thy frenð discouere nat thy secree ne thy folie / [2332] for they wol yeue yow Audience and lookynge / to supportacioñ in thy presence / and scorne thee in thyn Absence [2333] ¶ Another clerk' seith / That scarsly shaltou fynden any persone / that may kepe conseil sikerly [2334] ¶ The book seith / whil þat thou kepest thy conseil in thyn herte / thou kepest it in thy prison / [2335] and whan thou biwreyest' thy conseil to any wight / he holdeth thee in his snare [2336] ¶ And therefore yow is bettre to hyde youre conseil in youre herte / than praye hem / to whom ye han biwreyed youre conseil / that he wole kepen it cloos *and* stille [2337] ¶ ffor Seneca seith ¶ If so be / þat thou ne mayst nat thyn owene conseil hyde ' how darstou prayen any oother wight' thy conseil sikerly to kepe [2338] ¶ But nathelees / If thou wene sikerly / þat the biwreiyng' of thy conseil to a persone / wol make thy condicioñ to stonden in the bettre plyt/. thanne shaltou tellen hym thy conseil in this wise [2339] ¶ ffirst' thou shalt make no semblant' wheither thee were leuere pees or werre / or this / or that'. ne shewe hym nat thy wille and thyn entente / [2340] ffor trust wel / þat comenli thise conceillours been flatereres / [2341] namely the conceillours of grete lordes / [2342] for they enforcen hem alwey / rather to speken plesante wordes / enclynyng to the lordes lust'. than wordes þat been trewe or profitable [2343] ¶ And therefore / men seyn / þat the riche man hath seeld good conseil but if' he haue it of hym self' [2344] ¶ And after that thou shalt considere thy freendes and thyne enemys || [2345] And as touchynge thy freendes thou shalt con-

¶ Ihesus
Syrak /

¶ Seneca

¶ How a man
shall tellen his
conseil

sidere / wiche of hem / þat been moost feithful and moost
 wise / and eldest and most approued in conseillyng.
 [2346] And of hem shalt thou aske thy conseil / as the
 caas requireth

[2347] ¶ I seye / þat first / ye shul clepe to youre con-
 seil youre freendes that been trewe [2348] ¶ ffor Salomon ¶ Salomon
 seith ¶ That right as the herte of a man deliteth in sauour
 þat is soote / right so / the conseil of trewe freendes /
 yeueth swetenesse to the soule: [2349] He seith also ¶ ther
 may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend ¶ [2350] for
 certes gold ne siluer / beth nat so mucche worth as the
 goode wyl of a trewe freend [2351] ¶ And eek he seith /
 that a trewe freend / is a strong deffense / who so þat
 hym fyndeth / certes / he fyndeth a greet tresour
 [2352] ¶ Thanne shul ye eek considere / if that youre
 trewe freendes / been discrete and wise / ¶ ffor the book
 seith / Axe alwey thy conseil / of hem þat been wise /
 [2353] And by this same resoñ / shul ye clepen to youre
 conseil of youre freendes that been of age / swiche as han
 seyn and been expert in manye thynges / and been
 approued in conseillynges [2354] ¶ ffor the book seith /
 that in the olde men is the Sapience / and in longe tyme
 the prudence [2355] ¶ And Tullius seith / that grete
 thynges / ne been nat ay accompliced by strengthe / ne by
 deliuerneesse of body / but by good conseil / by Auctoritee
 of persones and by science / the whiche thre thynges / ne
 been nat fieble by age / but certes / they enforen and en-
 creescen day by day / [2356] And thanne / shul ye kepe
 this / for a general reule ¶ ffirst shul ye clepen to youre
 conseil / a fewe of youre freendes that been especiale /
 [2357] for Salomon seith ¶ Manye freendes haue thou /
 but among a thousand chese thee oon / to be thy conseil-
 lour / [2358] ffor al be it so / that thou first ne telle thy
 conseil / but to a fewe / thou mayst afterward telle it to
 mo folk if it be nede / [2359] but looke alwey / that thy
 consailours / haue thilke thre condicions þat I haue seyð

¶ Nota
 secundum
 Salomonem

bifore / that is to seyn / that they be trewe / wise / and
of oold experience [2360] ¶ And werke nat alwey in euery
nede / by oon counsellour allone ¶ ffor somtyme bihouoeth
it to been consealed by manye || [2361] ffor Salomon seith
¶ Saluacion) of thynges / is / where as ther been manye
conseillours

¶ Salomon

[2362] Now / sith I haue toold yow / of which folk /
ye sholde been consealed / now wol I teche yow which
conseil / ye oghte to eschewe [2363] ¶ ffirst' ye shul eschue
the conseillyng of fooles || ffor Salomon seith / taak' no conseil
of a fool / for he ne kan nocht conseille / but after his
owene lust' and his affeccioñ [2364] ¶ The book seith /
that' the *proprete* of a fool is this ¶ he troweth lightly
harm of euery wight / and lightly troweth alle bountee in
hym self [2365] ¶ Thou shalt eek eschue / the conseillyng'
of flatereres / swiche as enforen hem / rather to preise
youre persone by flaterye than for to telle yow / the sooth-
fastnesse of thynges

¶ Salomon

¶ Of conseillours
pat a man oghte
to eschue

¶ Tullius

[2366] ¶ Wherfore Tullius seith ¶ Amonges alle the
pestilences that been in freendshipe / the gretteste is
flaterie / And therefore is it moore nede pat thou eschue
and drede flatereres / than any oother peple [2367] ¶ The
book seith / thou shalt rather drede and flee / fro the
sweete wordes / of flaterynge preiseres / than fro the egre
wordes of thy freend / that seith thee thy sothes || [2368]
Salomon seith / that the wordes of a flaterere / is a snare
to chacche with Innocentz [2369] ¶ He seith also / that he
pat speketh to his freend / wordes of swetnesse and of
plesaunce / setteth a net' biforn his feet' to cacche hym
[2370] ¶ And therefore seith Tullius / Encline nat thyne
eres to flatereres / ne taaketh no conseil of the wordes of
flaterye ||. [2371] And Caton seith ¶ Auuse thee wel / and
eschue the wordes / of swetnesse and of plesaunce
[2372] ¶ And eek' thou shalt eschue / the conseillyng' of
thyne olde enemys / that been reconciled [2373] ¶ The
book' seith / that no wight retourneth sauflly / in-to the

¶ Cato

grace of his olde enemy [2374] ¶ And Isope seith / Ne
 trust nat to hem / to whiche thou hast had som tyme werre
 or enemytee / ne telle hem nat thy conseil [2375] ¶ And
 Seneca telleth the cause why ¶ It may nat be seith he / ¶ Seneca
 that where greet fyr / hath longe tyme endured / that
 ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse [2376] And
 therefore seith Salomon ¶ In thyn olde foo trust neuere ¶ Salomon
 [2377] ¶ ffor sikerly / though thyn enemy / be reconciled
 and maketh thee chiere of humylitee / and lowteth to thee
 with his heed ne trust hym neuere [2378] ¶ ffor certes /
 he maketh thilke feyned humilitee / moore for his profit
 than for any loue of thy persone / by cause that he deem-
 eth / to haue victorie ouer thy persone / by swich feyned
 contenance / the which victorie / he myghte nat wynne / by
 strif or werre [2379] And Peter Alfonse seith /. Make no ¶ Petrus Alfonse
 felawshipe / with thyne olde enemys || ffor if thou do hem
 bountee / they wol peruerten it / in to wikkednesse
 [2380] And eek thou most eschue / the conseillyng of hem /
 that been thy seruantz and beren thee greet reuerence / for
 perauenture / they doon it moore / for drede than for loue
 [2381] ¶ And therefore / seith a Philosophre / in this ¶ Philosophus
 wise ||. Ther is no wight partitly trewe / to hym þat he to
 soore dredeth [2382] ¶ And Tullius seith || Ther nys no ¶ Tullius
 myght so greet of any Emperour / that longe may endure /
 but if he haue / moore lo^ue of the peple / than for drede
 [2383] ¶ Thou shalt also eschue / the conseiling of folk
 that been dronkelewe || for they kan no conseil hyde
 [2384] ¶ ffor Salomon seith || Ther is no priuete / ther as ¶ Salomon
 regneth dronkenesse [2385] ¶ Ye shul also / han in suspect
 the conseillyng of swich folk. as conseille yow. a thyng
 priuely / and conseille yow / the contrarie openly [2386]
 ¶ ffor Cassidorie seith /. that it is a manere sleighte to ¶ Cassidorus
 hyndre / whan he sheweth to doon a thyng openly / and
 werketh priuely the contrarie [2387] ¶ Thou shalt also /
 haue in suspect. the conseillyng of wikked folk ||. ffor the
 book seith / The conseillyng of wikked folk. is alwey ful

¶ Daud

of fraude ||. [2388] And Daud seith ¶ blisful is that man /
 þat hath nat folwed / the conseilyng^t of sherewes [2389]
 ¶ Thou shalt also eschue / the conseillyng^t of yong^t folk .
 for hir conseil is nat rype

[2390] NOW sire / sith I have shewed yow / of which
 folk^t ye shul take youre conseil / and of which folk^t ye shul
 folwe the conseil ° [2391] now wol I teche yow / how ye
 shal examyne youre conseil / after the doctrine of Tullius
 [2392] ¶ In the examynynge thanne of youre conseilour^t
 ye shul considere manye thynges [2393] ¶ Alderfirst thou
 shalt considere / þat in thilke thyng^t that thou purposest /
 and vpon what thyng^t thou wolt^t haue conseil / þat verray
 trouthe / be seyð and conserued / this is to seyn / telle
 trewely thy tale [2394] ¶ ffor he that seith fals / may nat
 wel be conseilled / in that cas of which he lieth [2395]
 ¶ And after this / thou shalt considere the thynges þat
 acorden to that thou purposest / for to do / by thy conseil-
 lours if resoñ accorde therto /. [2396] And eek / if thy
 myght may atteine ther-to / And if the moore part^t and the
 bettre part^t of thy conseilours acorde ther-to / or noon
 [2397] ¶ Thanne shaltou considere / what thyng shal
 folwe / after hir conseillyng^t. as hate / pees / werre /
 grace / profit^t or damage / and manye othere thynges
 [2398] ¶ Thanne / of alle thise thynges / thou shalt chese
 the beste / and weyue alle othere thynges [2399] ¶ Thanne
 shaltou considere of what roote is engendred^t the matiere
 of thy conseil / and what fruyt^t it may conserue and
 engendre [2400] ¶ Thou shalt eek considere alle thise
 causes / fro whennes they been sprongen [2401] ¶ And
 whan ye han examyned youre conseil / as I have seyð /
 and which partie is the bettre and moore profitable / and
 hast approued it^t by manye wise folk^t and olde [2402]
 ¶ thanne shaltou considere / it thou mayst parfourne it^t and
 maken of it a good ende [2403] ¶ ffor certes resoñ wol nat
 that any man / sholde bigynne a thyng^t. but if he myghte /
 parfourne it^t as hym oghte [2404] ¶ Ne no wight^t sholde

¶ how a man
 shal examine his
 conseilours after
 the doctrine of
 Tullius

take vp on hym so heuy a charge / that he myghite nat bere
 it [2405] ¶ ffor the *prouerbe* seith ||. he that to muche ¶ *prouerbe*
 embraceth / distreyneth litel [2406] And Catoñ seith ¶ *Cato*
 ¶ Assay to do swich thyng^t. as thou hast power to doon /
 lest that the charge oppresse thee / so soore / that thee
 bihoueth / to weyue thyng^t that thou hast bigonne /
 [2407] And if so be / þat thou be in doute / wheither thou
 mayst^t *parfourn*e a thing^t or noon / chese rather / to suffre
 than bigynne [2408] ¶ And Piers Alphonc seith ¶ If ¶ *Petrus Alfonc*
 thou hast myght to doon a thyng^t of which thou most
 repente thee / it is bettre / nay than ye [2409] ¶ this is
 to seyn / that thee is bettre / holde thy tonge stille / than
 for to speke [2410] ¶ Thanne may ye vnderstonde / by
 strengre resons / that if thou hast po^lwer / to *parfourn*e a
 werk^t of which thou shalt repente / thanne is it bettre /
 that thou suffre than bigynne [2411] ¶ wel seyn they þat
 defenden euery wigh^t to assaye any thyng^t of which he is
 in doute / wheither he may *parfourn*e it or noon || [2412]
 And after / whan ye han examyned youre conseil / as I
 haue seyð biforn / *and* knowen wel / that ye may *par*-
*fourn*e youre *emprise* / conferme it thanne sadly til it be at
 an ende

[2413] **N**Ow is it resoñ and tyme þat I shewe yow /
 whanne and wherfore / that ye may change youre conseil-
 lours / with-uten youre repreue [2414] ¶ Soothly / a man ¶ *How a man*
 may chaungen his *purpos* and his *conseil* if the cause
 cesseth / or whan a newe caas bitydeth [2415] ¶ ffor the
 lawe seith that vpon thynges þat newly bityden / bihoueth
 newe conseil [2416] ¶ And *senec*/ seith ||. If thy conseil
 is comen / to the eeris of thyn enemy change thy conseil ¶ *Seneca*
 [2417] ¶ Thou mayst also change thy conseil / If so be /
 that thou mayst fynde / that by *errour* / or by oother
 cause / harm or damage may bityde [2418] ¶ Also / if thy
 conseil be *dishonest*. or ellis cometh of *dishoneste* cause /
 change thy conseil ||. [2419] ffor the lawes seyn ¶ that
 alle bihestes that been *dishoneste* / been of no value

[2420] ¶ And eek / If so be / þat it be impossible / or may nat goodly be parfourned or kept

[2421] ¶ And take this / for a general reule / that euery conseil þat is affermed so strongly / that it may nat be chaunged for no condicioñ that may bityde ¶ I seye / þat thilke conseil is wikked. [2422]

¶ Melibeus

This Melibeus / whanne he hadde herd the doctrine of his wyf dame Prudence / answerde in this wyse [2423] ¶ Dame quod he as yet in to this tyme / ye han wel and couenablely taught me as in general / how I shal gouerne me in the chesyng / and in the withholdyng of my conseilours || [2424] but now wolde I fayn / that ye wolde condescende in especial / [2425] and telle me / how liketh yow / or what semeth yow by oure conseilours / that we han chosen in oure present nede

¶ Prudence

[2426] **M**y lord quod she / I biseke yow in al humblesse / that ye wol nat wilfully replie agayn my resoñs / ne distempre youre lierte / thogh I speke thyng that yow displese || [2427] ffor god woot that as in myn entente I speke it for youre beste / for youre honour / and for youre profite eke / [2428] And soothly I hope / that youre benyngnytee / wol taken it in pacience [2429] ¶ Trusteth me wel quod she / that youre conseil as in this caas ne sholde nat as to speke properly / be called a conseillyng but a mocioñ or a moeuynge of folye / [2430] in which conseil / ye han erred in many a sondry wise

[2431] ¶ ffirst / and forward / ye han erred in thassemblyng of youre conseilours || [2432] ffor ye sholde first haue cleped a fewe folk / to youre conseil / and after ye myghite han shewed it to mo folk / if it hadde been nede [2433] ¶ But certes / ye han sodeynly cleped to youre conseil a greet multitude of peple ful chargeant and ful anyous for to heere [2434] ¶ Also / ye han erred / for there as ye sholden oonly haue cleped to youre conseil youre trewe frendes olde and wise / [2435] ye han ycleped straunge folk / and yonge folk. false flatereres / and enemys

reconsiled / and folk / þat doon yow reuerence withouten
loue [2436] ¶ And eek also / ye haue erred / for ye han
brought *with* yow to youre conseil / Ire / coueitise / and
hastifnesse / [2437] the whiche thre thinges been con-
trariouse to euery conseil / honeste and profitable / [2438]
the whiche thre / ye han nat anientissed or destroyed hem /
neither in youre self^e ne in youre conseilours as yow ogh^te
[2439] ¶ Ye han erred also / for ye han shewed^e ¹ to youre
conseillours / youre talent^e and youre affecciōn / to make
werre anon / and for to do vengeance / [2440] they han
espied by youre wordes to what thyng^e ye been enclyned ||
[2441] And therefore / han they rather conseilled yow to
youre talent^e than to youre profit^e [2442] ¶ Ye han erred
also / for it semeth / þat it suffiseth / to han been con-
seilled by thise conseilours oonly / and wip^e litel Auys /
[2443] where-as in so greet^e and so heigh^e a nede / it hadde
been necessarie mo conseilours / and moore deliberaciōn to
parfourn^e youre emprise [2444] ¶ Ye han erred also / for
ye han nat examyned youre conseil / in the forseide
manere ne in due manere as the caas requireth [2445] ¶ Ye
han erred also / for ye han nat maked no diuision bitwixe
youre conseilours ¶ this is to seyn / bitwixen youre trewe
freendes / and youre feyned conseilours : [2446] ne ye han
nat knowe the wil of youre trewe freendes / olde and wise
[2447] but ye han cast^e alle hire wordes in an hochepot^e
and enclyned youre herte to the moore partie / and to the
gretter nombre / and there been ye condescended [2448]
¶ And sith ye woot wel þat men shal alwey / fynde a
gretter nombre of fooles / than of wise men / [2449] and
therefore / the conseils that been at congregaciōns and mul-
titudes of folk^e. there as men take moore reward^e to the
nombre / than to the sapience of persones / [2450] ye se wel /
that in swiche conseillynges / fooles han the maistrie [2451]
Melibeus answerde agayn / and seyde / I graunte wel that ¶ Melibeus
I haue erred || [2452] but there as thou hast toold me heer-
biforn / þat he nys nat to blame þat chaungeth hise con-

seillours in *certein* caas / and for *certeine* Iuste causes
 [2453] ¶ I am al redy to chaunge my conseilours / right
 as thow wolt deuyse / [2454] ¶ The *prouerbe* seith /. that
 for to do synne is mannyssh / but certes / for to *perseuere*
 longe in synne / is werk of the deuel

¶ *Prouerbe*¶ *Prudence*

[2455] ¶ To this sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and seyde [2456] ¶ Examineth quod she youre conseil / and lat vs see / the whiche of hem / han spoken most resonably / and taught yow best conseil ||. [2457] And for as muche as *pat* the examynacion is necessarie / lat vs bigynne at the surgiens and at the phisiciens / that first speken in this matiere [2458] ¶ I sey yow / that the surgiens and phisiciens / han seyde yow in youre conseil discreetly / as hem oughte [2459] ¶ And in hir speche seyde ful wisely / that to the office of hem aperteneth to doon to euery wight honour and profit / and no wight for to anoye / [2460] and in hir craft / to doon greet diligence vn-to the cure of hem / whiche *pat* they han in hir gouernance / [2461] And sire / right as they han answered wisely and discreetly / [2462] right so rede I that they been heighly and souereynly gerdoned for hir noble speche / [2463] and eek for they sholde do / the moore ententif bisynesse in the curacion of youre doghter deere || [2464] ffor al be it so / *pat* they been youre freendes / therfore shal ye nat suffren / that they serue yow for noght / [2465] but ye oghte the rather gerdone hem and shewe hem youre largesse [2466] ¶ And as touchynge the proposicion which that the Phisiciens encreesceden in this caas / this is to seyn / [2467] that in maladies / that oon contrarie is warished by another contrarie /. [2468] I wolde fayn knowe / hou ye vnderstode this text / and what is youre sentence [2469] ¶ Certes quod Melibeus / I vnderstode it in this wise [2470] ¶ that right as they han doon me a contrarie / right so / sholde I doon hem another || [2471] ffor right as they han venged hem on me / and doon me wrong: Right so / shal I venge me vpon hem /

¶ *Melibeus*

and doon hem wrongt. [2472] and thanne haue I cured oon contrarie by another

[2473] Lo. lo quod dame Prudence / how lightly is ¶ Prudence
 euery man enclined to his owene desir / and to his owene
 plesaunce [2474] ¶ Certes quod she the wordes of the
 Phisiciens / ne sholde nat han been vnderstonden in thys
 wise ||. [2475] ffor certes / wikkednesse / is nat contrarie
 to wikkednesse / ne vengeance to vengeance / ne wrongt
 to wrongt but they been semblable [2476]. ¶ And ther-
 fore / o vengeance / is nat warissed by another venge-
 aunce / ne o wroongt by another wroongt. [2477] but
 euerich of hem encreesceth and aggreggeth oother [2478]
 ¶ But certes / the wordes of the Phisiciens / sholde been
 vnderstonden in this wise [2479] ¶ ffor good and wikked-
 nesse / been two contraries and pees and werre / venge-
 aunce and suffraunce / discord and accord and manye
 othere thynges || [2480] But certes / wikkednesse / shal be
 warissed by goodnesse / discord by accord / werre by pees /
 and so forth of othere thynges [2481] And heer-to accordeth
 Seint Paul the Apostle / in manye places [2482] ¶ He
 seith Ne yeldeth nat harm for harm / ne wikked speche /
 for wikked speche / [2483] But do wel / to hym þat dooth
 thee harm / and blesse hym þat seith to thee harm [2484]
 ¶ And in manye othere places he amonesteth pees and
 accord [2485] ¶ But now wol I speke to yow / of the con-
 seil / which þat was yeuen to yow / by the men of lawe /
 and the wise folk [2486] that seyden alle by oon accord /
 as ye han herd bifore [2487] ¶ That ouer alle thynges / ye
 sholde doon youre diligence to kepen youre persone / and
 to warnestoore youre hous [2488] ¶ And seyden also that
 in this caas / yow oghen for to werken ful auysely and
 with greet deliberacion [2489] ¶ And sire / as to the firste
 point. that toucheth to the keypyng of youre persone /
 [2490] ye shul vnderstonde / that he þat hath werre shal
 euere moore / mekely and deuoutly / preyen biforn alle
 thynges / [2491] that Ihesus crist of his grete mercy wol

¶ Paulus Apostolus

han hym in his *proteccion* / and been his souereyn helpyngt
 at his nede ||. [2492] ffor *certes* / In this world ther is no
 wight that may be consoiled ne kept sufficently with-
 outen the keypyngt of oure lord Ihesu crist [2493] ¶ To this
 sentence accordeth the *prophete dauid* / that seith || [2494]
 If god ne kepe the Citee / in ydel waketh he that it kepeth
 [2495] Now sire / thanne shul ye *committe* / the keypyngt of
 youre persone to youre trewe freendes / that been approued
 and knowe / [2496] and of hem / shul ye axen helpe / youre
 persone for to kepe ¶ ffor Catoñ seith ¶ If thou hast
 nede of help / axe it of thy freendes || [2497] ffor ther nys
 noon so good a Phisicien / as thy trewe freend [2498]
 ¶ And after this / thanne shul ye kepe yow fro alle
 straunge folk / and fro lyeres / and haue alwey in suspect
 hire compaignye [2499] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonco seith || Ne
 taak / no compaignye by the weye of straunge men but if
 so be þat thou haue knowe hym of a lenger tyme [2500]
 ¶ And if so be / that he be falle in-to thy compaignye *par-*
*a*uerture *with*outen thyn assent / [2501] enquere thanne /
 as subtilly as thou mayst of his *conuersacion* / and of his lyf
 bifore / and feyne thy wey ||. seye that thou goost thider
 as thou wolt nat go / [2502] and if he bereth a spere /
 hoold thee on the right syde / and if he bere a swerd /
 hoold thee on his lift syde. [2503] ¶ And after this /
 thanne / shul ye kepe yow wisely from all swich manere
 peple as I haue seyde bifore / And hem and hir conseil
 eschewe / [2504] ¶ And after this / thanne shul ye kepe yow
 in swich manere / [2505] that for any *presumpcion* of youre
 strengthe / that ye ne dispise nat ne acounte nat the
 myght of youre *Aduersarie* / so litel / that ye lete / the
 keypyngt of youre persone / for youre *presumpcion* / [2506]
 for euery wys man / dredeth his enemy [2507] ¶ And
 Salomon seith ¶ weleful is he / that of alle hath drede /
 [2508] for certes / he that thurgh the hardynesse of his
 herte / and thurgh the hardynesse of hym self / hath to
 greet *presumpcion* / hym shal yuel bityde [2509] ¶ Thanne /

¶ Dauid propheta

¶ Cato

¶ Petrus Alfonco

¶ Salomon

shul ye eueremoore countrewayte embussfiementz and alle
 espiaille [2510] ¶ ffor senec^e seith ¶ That the wise man / ¶ Seneca
 he dredeth harmes / [. . . no gap] [2511] ne he ne
 falleth in-to perils / that perils eschueth || [2512] And al
 be it so / þat it seme that thou art^e in siker place / yet
 shaltow alwey do thy diligence in keyynge of thy persone
 [2513] ¶ this is to seyn Ne be nat necligent^e to kepe thy
 persone / nat oonly / for thy gretteste enemys / but for thy
 leeste enemy [2514] [*Car seneque dit il appartient a homme*
*bien enseigne qui [l] doute son petit ennemy*¹] [2515] ¶ Ouyde ¶ Ouidius
 seith || that the litel wesele / wol slee the grete bole / and the
 wilde hert^e [2516] ¶ And the book / seith || A litel thorn /
 may prikke a greet kyng ful soore ||. And an hound / wol
 holde the wilde boor [2517] ¶ But natheles / I sey nat^e
 thou shalt be coward^e / that thou doute / ther / wher as is no
 drede [2518] ¶ The book seith / that somme folk^e: han
 greet lust to deceyue / but yet^e they dreden hem to be de-
 ceuyed [2519] ¶ Yet shaltou drede / to been empoisoned^e
 And kepe yow / from the compaignye of Scorneres [2520]
 ¶ ffor the book seith : with scorneres make no compaignye /
 but flee hire wordes as venym

[2521] ¶ Now as to the seconde point^e ¶ Where as youre
 wise conseilours consilled yow to warnestoore youre hous /
 with gre^t diligence [2522] ¶ .I. wolde fayn knowe / how that
 ye vnderstonde / thilke wordes / and what is youre sentence

[2523] Melibeus answerde and seyde ¶ Certes I vnder-
 stande it in this wise ¶ That I shal warnestoore myn hous /
 with toures / swiche as han Castelles / and othere manere
 edifices / and Armure and Artelries / [2524] by whiche
 thynges / I may my persone and myn hous so kepen *and*
 deffenden that myne enemys / shul been in drede / myn
 hous for to Approche ¶ Melibeus

[2525] TO this sentence / answerde anon Prudence || ¶ Prudence
 Warnestooryng^e quod she of heighe toures and of grete
 edifices / [*appartient aucunes fois à orgueil*. [2526] *L'en fait*
les tours et les grans édifices (Le Ménagier, i. 209)] with grete

costages and with greet trauaille / and whan that they been
accompliced / yet be they nat worth a stree / but if they be
defended by trewe freendes that been / olde and wise [2527]

¶ Nota / of the
strongeste garny-
sone that may be.

¶ And vnderstood wel / that the gretteste and strongeste
garnyson / that a riche man may haue / as wel to kepen his
persone as hise goodes: is / [2528] that he be biloued /
amonges hys subgetz and with hise neighebores [2529] ¶ ffor
thus seith Tullius ¶ That ther is a manere garnyson / that
no man may venquysse ne disconfite / and that is / [2530]
a lord to be biloued of hise Citezeins / and of his peple

¶ Tullius

[2531] NOW sire / as to the thridde point. where as
youre olde / and wise conseillours seyden ¶ That yow ne
oghte nat sodeynly ne hastily proceden in this nede /
[2532] but that yow oghte purueyen and apparaillen yow
in this caas with greet diligence and greet deliberacion
[2533] ¶ trewely / I trowe that they seyden right wisely
and right sooth [2534] ¶ ffor Tullius seith / In euery
nede / er thou bigynne it / Apparaill thee with greet
diligence [2535] ¶ Thanne seye I / that in vengeance
takyng: In werre / in bataille / and in warnestoorung:
[2536] er thou bigynne / .I. rede / þat thou apparaill thee
ther to / and do it with greet deliberacion: [2537] ¶ ffor
Tullius seith ¶ The longe apparaillyng: biforn the bataille /
maketh short victorie ||. [2538] And Cassidorus seith ¶ The
garnyson is stronger / whan it is longe tyme auyset.

¶ Tullius

¶ Tullius

¶ Cassidorus

[2539] But now lat vs speken / of the conseil that was
accorded by youre neighebores / swiche as doon yow
reuerence withouten loue / [2540] youre olde enemys recon-
siled / youre flatereres / [2541] that conseilled yow cer-
teyne thynges priuely / and openly / conseilleden yow the
contrarie [2542] ¶ The yonge folk also / that conseilleden
yow to venge yow / and make werre anon [2543] ¶ And
certes sire / as I haue seyd biforn / ye han greetly erred /
to han cleped / swich manere folk: to youre conseil / [2544]
which conseillours been ynogh repreued by the resoñs
aforeseyd: / [2545] but natheles / lat vs now descende to

the special ¶ Ye shuln first *procede* / after the doctrine of Tullius [2546] ¶ Certes / the trouthe of this matiere / or of this conseil / nedeth nat' diligently enquire / [2547] for it is wel wist' whiche they been / that han doon to yow this trespas and vileynye / [2548] and how manye trespasours and in what manere / they han to yow doon / al this wrong' and all this vileynye [2549] ¶ And after this thanne / shul ye examyne the seconde condicion / which that the same Tullius / addeth in this matiere [2550] ¶ ffor Tullius put a thyng'. which that he clepeth consentynge / this is to seyn ||. [2551] who been they and how manye / [*Et quelz ilz sont*] that consenten to thy conseil / in thy wilfulnesse / to doon hastif vengeance [2552] ¶ And lat vs considere also who been they and how manye been they / and whiche been they / that' consenteden to youre Aduersaries [2553] ¶ And certes / as to the firste poynt' It is wel knowen / whiche folk' been they / that consenteden / to youre hastif wilfulnesse / [2554] for trewely / alle tho that conseilleden yow / to maken sodeyn werre / ne been nat youre freendes [2555] ¶ Lat vs now considere / whiche been they / that ye holde so greetly youre freendes as to youre persone || [2556] ffor al be it so / that ye be myghty and riche / certes / ye ne been nat but allone / [2557] for certes / ye ne han no child but a doghter / [2558] ne ye ne han bretheren ne cosyns *germayns* / ne noon ooper neigh kynrede / [2559] wherfore that youre enemys for drede sholde stinte / to plede with yow / or to destroye youre persone [2560] ¶ Ye knowen also that youre richesces / mooten been dispended / in diuerse parties / [2561] and whan þat euery wight hath his part'. they ne wollen taken but litel reward' to v[e]nge thy deeth ||. [2562] But thyne enemys / been thre / and they han manie children / bretheren / cosyns / and oother ny kynrede / [2563] And though̄ so were that thou haddest slayn of hem .ij.º or .iij.º yet dwellen ther ynowe to wreken hir deeth / and to sle thy persone ||. [2564] And though so be that' youre kynrede be moore siker and stedefast'. than

the kyn of^t youre aduersarie^e || [2565] yet natheles youre kynrede / nys but a fer kynrede / they been / but litel syb to yow / [2566] and the kyn of youre enemys been ny syb to hem / And *certes* / as in that^t hir condicioñ / is bet^t than youre [2567] ¶ Thanne / lat vs considere also / if the conseillynge^t of hem þat conseilleden yow / to taken sodeyn vengeance / wheither it accorde to resoñ : [2568] And *certes* / ye knowe wel nay || [2569] for as by right and resoñ / ther may no man taken vengeance on no wight / but the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiccioñ of it^t [2570] whan it is graunted hym / to take thilke vengeance hastily or attempely as the lawe requireth [2571] ¶ And yet moore ouer / of thilke word / that^t Tullius clepeth consentynge /. [2572] thou shalt considere / if thy myght and ¹thy power / may consenten and suffise / to thy wilfulnesse / and to thy conseilours : [2573] And *certes* / thou mayst wel seyn / that nay [2574] ¶ ffor sikerly / as for to speke proprely / we may do no thyng^t. but oonly swich thyng^t as we may doon rightfully : [2575] And *certes* rightfully ne mowe ye take no vengeance / as of youre propre Auctoritee [2576] ¶ thanne mowe ye seen / that youre power ne consenteth nat^t ne accordeth nat^t with youre wilfulnesse [2577] ¶ Lat vs now examyne the thridde point^t that Tullius clepeth Consequent^t [2578] ¶ Thou shalt vnderstonde that the vengeance that thou purposest for to take / is the consequent ||. [2579] And ther-of / folweth another vengeance / *peril* / and werre / and othere damages with-oute nombre / of whiche / we be nat war / as at this tyme [2580] ¶ And as touchynge the fourthe point^t. that Tullius clepeth engendrynge : [2581] thou shalt considere / that this wrong^t which that is doon to thee / is engendred of the hate of thyne enemys / [2582] and of the vengeance takynge / vpon that^t wolde engendre another vengeance / and muchel sorwe and wastynge of riches as I seyde

[2583] ¶ Now sire / as to the point^t that Tullius clepeth causes / which that is the laste point^t. [2584] thou

shalt vnderstonde / þat the wrong^t that thou hast receyued /
 hath certeine causes / [2585] whiche þat clerkes clepen
 Oriens and Efficiens / and Causa longinqua / and Causa
 propinqua /. this is to seyn / the fer cause and the ny
 cause [2586] ¶ The fer cause / is almyghty god / that is
 cause of alle thynges [2587] ¶ The neer cause / is thy
 thre enemys [2588] ¶ The cause Accidental / was hate
 [2589] ¶ The cause material / been the fyue woundes of
 thy doghter [2590] ¶ The cause formal / is the manere of
 hir werkyng that broghten laddres and cloumben in at
 thy wyndowes : [2591] The cause final / was for to sle thy
 doghter / It letted nat^t in as muche as in hem was [2592]
 ¶ But for to speken of the fer cause / as to what ende they
 shul come / or what shal finally bityde of hem in this
 caas / ne kan .I. nat deme ||. but by coniectyng and by
 supposyng [2593] ¶ for we shul suppose / that they shul
 come to a wikked ende /. [2594] by cause / that the book^t
 of decrees seith ||. seelden or with greet peyne / been causes
 ybroght / to good ende / whanne they been baddely bigonne

¶ In libro decre-
taliū

[2595] ¶ Now sire / If men wolde axe me / why that
 god suffred men to do yow this vileynye : Certes / I kan
 nat wel answeere / as for no soothfastnesse [2596] ¶ ffor
 thapostle seith / that the sciences and the Iuggementz of
 oure lord god almyghty been ful depe / [2597] ther may
 no man comprehend ne serchen hem suffisantly / [2598]
 ¶ Natheles / by certeyne presumpcioñs and coniectynges /
 I holde and bileue [2599] that god / which that is ful of
 Iustice and of rightwisesse hath suffred this bityde by
 Iuste cause resonable ||.

¶ Apostolus

[2600] Thy name is Melibee / this is to seyn / a man
 that drynketh hony [2601] ¶ Thou hast ydronke so muchel
 hony of sweete temporeel riches / and delices and hon-
 ours of this world / [2602] that thou art dronken / and
 hast forgotten / Ihesu crist^t thy creatour / [2603] thou ne
 hast nat doon to hym swich honour and reuerence as thee
 oughte / [2604] ne thou ne hast nat^t wel ytaken kepe / to

¶ Ouidius

the wordes of Ouide ¶ That seith || [2605] vnder the hony
of the goodes of the body / is hyd the venym / that sleeth
the soule [2606] ¶ And salomon seith ¶ If thou hast
founden hony / ete of it that suffiseth / [2607] for if thou
ete of it out of mesure / thou shalt spewe / and be nedý
and poure / [2608] And perauenture / Crist^t hath thee in
despit/ and hath turned away fro thee his face and hise
eeris of Misericorde [2609] ¶ And also / he hath ¹suffred /
that thou hast been punysshed in the manere that thou
hast ytrespassed [2610] ¶ Thou hast doon synne / agayn
oure lord crist^t. [2611] for certes. the .iiij. enemys of man-
kynde / that is to seyn / the fless^h / the feend^t and the
world^t /. [2612] thou hast suffred hem / entre in to thyn
herte wilfully by the wyndowes of thy body / [2613] and
hast nat defended thy self suffisantly agayns hire assautes /
and hire temptacio^{is} / so / that they han wounded thy
soule / in .v. places / [2614] this is to seyn / the deedly
synnes that been entred in-to thyn herte / by thy .v.
wittes ||. [2615] And in the same manere / oure lord crist^t
hath woold and suffred / that thy .iiij. enemys been entred /
in-to thyn hous by the wyndowes / [2616] and han
ywounded thy doghter in the foreseyde manere

¶ Melibee

[2617] ¶ Certes quod Melibee / I se wel that ye en-
force yow muchel by wordes / to ouercome me / in swich
manere that I shal nat / venge me of myne enemys [2618]
shewynge me the perils and the yueles / that myghten
falle of this vengeance || [2619] But who so wolde considere
in alle vengeancees the perils and yueles þat myghte sewe
of vengeance takynge / [2620] a man wolde neuere take
vengeance / and that were harm / [2621] for by the venge-
ance takynge / been the wikked men disseuered fro the
goode men [2622] ¶ And they that han wyl to do wikked-
nesse / restreyne hir wikked purpos / whan they seen the
punyssynge and chastisyng of the trespassours [2623]
[*E*t a ce Respont dame prudence certes dist elle *Ie t'ottroye*
que de vengeance vient molt de maulx Et de biens ;

[2624] *Mais vengeance n'appartient pas a vn chascun fors seulement aux iuges Et a ceulx qui ont la iuridicion sur les malfaitteurs.* (MS Reg. 19 C. vii, leaf 136.)]

[2625] ¶ And yet seye I moore /. that right as a singuler persone / synneth / in takyng vengeance of another man ./

[2626] right so / synneth the Iuge / if he do no vengeance of hem / that it han disserued || [2627] ffor Senec^e seith thus ¶ That maister he seith is good / that proueth shrewes .

¶ Seneca

[2628] ¶ And as Cassidore seith ¶ A man dredeth to do outrages / whan he woot^t and knoweth / that it^t displeth to the Iuges / and souereyns [2629] ¶ Another seith ¶ The Iuge þat dredeth to do right^t. maketh men shrewes ||.

¶ Cassidorus

[2630] And Seint Paule the Apostle / seith in his epistle / whan he writeth vn-to the Romayns : That the Iuges beren nat the spere / with-uten cause / [2631] but they heren it^t to punyssen the shrewes and mysdoeres / and to defende the goode men [2632] ¶ If ye wol thanne take vengeance of youre enemys / ye shul retourne / or haue youre recours to the Iuge that hath the Iurisdiction vp-on hem / [2633] and he shal punyssen hem / as the lawe axeth and requireth

¶ Paulus Apostolus ad Romanos

[2634] A quod Melibee / this vengeance / liketh me no thyng^t [2635] ¶ I bithenke me now and take heede / how ffortune / hath norissed me fro my childhede / and hath holpen me / to passe many a stroong^t paas [2636] ¶ Now wol I assayen hire trowynge with goddes helpe / that she shal helpe me / my shame for to venge

¶ Melibee

[2637] Certes quod Prudence ¶ If ye wol werke by my conseil / ye shul nat^t assaye ffortune by no wey / [2638] ne ye shul nat^t lene or bowe / vnto hire after the word of Senec [2639] ¶ ffor thynges / that been folily doon / and that been in hope of ffortune / shullen neuere come to good ende ||. [2640] And as the same Senec^e seith ¶ The moore cleer and the moore shynyng^t that ffortune is / the moore brotil / and the sonner broken she is || [2641] trusteth nat in hire / for she nys nat stidefast^t ne stable [2642] for whan thow trowest^t to be moost seur and siker of hire

¶ Prudence

¶ Seneca

helpe she wol faille thee / and deceyue thee [2643] ¶ And
 where as ye seyn that ffortune hath norissed yow fro youre
 childhede /. [2644] I seye / that¹ in so muchel / shul ye /
 ¶ Seneca the lasse truste in hire and in hir wit ||. [2645] ffor senec
 seith || what man that is norissed by ffortune / she maketh
 hym a greet^t fool [2646] ¶ Now thanne / syn ye desire /
 and axe vengeance / and the vengeance / that is doon after
 the lawe and bifore the Iuge / ne liketh yow nat^t [2647]
 And the vengeance that is doon in hope of ffortune is *peril-*
ous and *vncertein* [2648] Thanne haue ye noon oother
 remedie / but for to haue youre recours / vnto the souereyn
 Iuge that vengeth / alle vileynyes and wronges /. [2649]
 And he shal venge yow / after that hym self witnesseth /
 where as he seith ||. [2650] leueth the vengeance to me /
 and I shal do it^t

¶ Melibee

[2651] Melibee answerde ||. If I ne venge me nat^t. of
 the vileynye that men han doon to me [2652] .I. sompne or
 warne hem / that han doon to me that vileynye *and* alle
 othere / to do me another vileynye [2653] ¶ ffor it is writen
 ¶ If thou take no vengeance of an oold vileynye / thou somp-
 nest^t thyne Aduersaries to do thee a newe vileynye [2654]
 ¶ And also / for my suffrance / men wolden do to me so
 muchel vileynye / that^t I myghte neither bere it ne sus-
 teene / [2655] and so sholde I been put^t and holden ouer
 lowe [2656] ¶ ffor men seyn / In muchel suffrynge / shul
 manye thynges falle vn-to thee / whiche / thou shalt nat
 mowe suffre

¶ Prudence

[2657] Certes quod Prudence .I. graunte yow that
 ouer muchel suffrañce nys nat good / [2658] but yet ne
 folweth it nat ther-of / that every persone / to whom men
 doon vileynye take of it vengeance / [2659] for that aper-
 teneth and longeth .al only to the Iuges / for they shul
 venge the vileynyes and iniuries ||. [2660] And ther-fore /
 tho two Auctoritees / that ye han seyde aboue / been oonly
 vnderstonden in the Iuges / [2661] for whan they suffren
 ouer muchel the wronges and the vileynyes to be doon

withouten punysshynge / [2662] they sompne nat a man al
 oonly / for to do newe wronges / but they comanden it
 [2663] ¶ Also a wys man seith / that the Iuge that cor-
 recteth nat the synnere comandeth and biddeth hym do
 synne [2664] ¶ And the Iuges and souereyns myghten in
 hir land so muchel suffre of the shrewes and mysdoeres /
 [2665] that they sholden by swich suffrance by proces of
 tyme / wexen of swich power and myght / that they sholden
 putte out the Iuges and the souereyns / from hir places /
 [2666] and atte laste maken hem lesen hire lordshipes

[2667] ¶ But lat vs now putte / that ye haue leue to
 venge yow / [2668] I seye / ye been nat of myght and
 power / as now to venge yow / [2669] for if ye wole maken
 comparisoñ / vn-to the myght of youre Aduersaries / ye shul
 fynde in manye thynges / that I haue shewed yow er this /
 that hire condicioñ / is bettre than youres [2670] ¶ And
 therefore seye I that it is good as now / that ye suffre and
 be pacient

[2671] ¶ fforthermoore / ye knowen wel / that after the
comune sawe / it is a woodnesse / a man / to stryue with a
 strengre / or a moore myghty man / than he is hym self ||
 [2672] And for to stryue with a man of euene strengthe /
 that is to seyn / with as stronge a man as he / it is peril /
 [2673] And for to stryue with a weyker man / it is folie
 [2674] ¶ And therefore / sholde a man flee stryuyng / as
 muchel as he myghte [2675] ¶ ffor Salomon seith || It is a
 greet worshipe to a man / to kepen hym fro noyse and
 stryft [2676] ¶ And if it so bifalle or happe / that a man
 of gretter myght and strengthe / than thou art. do thee
 grevaunce / [2677] studie / and bisye thee rather to stille /
 the ¹same grevaunce / than for to venge thee || [2678] ffor
 Senec seith || That he putteth hym in greet peril / that
 stryueth with a gretter man / than he is hym self [2679]
 ¶ And Catoñ seith / If a man of hyer estaat or degree / or
 moore myghty than thou / do thee anoy or greuañce /
 suffre hym / [2680] for he that oones hath greued thee /

¶ Salomon

¶ Seneca

¶ Cato

another tyme / may releuee thee and helpe: [2681] ¶ Yet
 sette I caas / ye haue bothe myght and licence / for to
 venge yow / [2682] .I. seye that ther be ful manye
 thynges / that shul restreyne yow / of vengeance takynge /
 [2683] and make yow / for to enclyne to suffre / and for
 to han pacience / in the thynges / that han been doon to
 yow [2684] ¶ ffirst and foreward / if ye wole considere
 the defautes / that been in youre owene persone / [2685]
 for whiche defautes / god hath suffred yow haue this
 tribulacioñ / as I haue seyde yow heer biforn [2686] ¶ ffor
 the Poete seith That we oghte paciently taken the tribu-
 laciõs that comen to vs whan we thynken and consideren /
 that we han disserued to haue hem [2687] ¶ And Seint
 Gregorie seith || That whan a man considereth wel the
 nombre of hise defautes / and of his synnes /. [2688] the
 peynes and the tribulaciõs that he suffreth / semen / the
 lesse vn-to hym [2689] And in as muche / as hym thynk-
 eth / hise synnes moore heuy and greuous / [2690] in so
 muche / semeth his peyne the lighte / an[d] the esier vn-to
 hym [2691] ¶ Also / ye owen to enclyne and bowe youre
 herte / to take the pacience of oure lord Ihesu crist || As
 seith seint Peter in hise Epistles [2692] ¶ Ihesu crist he
 seith / hath suffred for vs *and* yeuen ensample to euery
 man / to folwe and sewe hym / [2693] for he dide neuere
 synne / ne neuere cam ther a vileynous word out of his
 mouþ / [2694] whan men cursed hym / he cursed hem
 noght. And whan men betten hym / he manaced hem
 noght. [2695] ¶ Also / the grete pacience / which the
 seintes that been in Paradys / han had in tribulaciõs that
 they han ysuffred with-uten hir desert or gilt. [2696]
 oghte muchel stiren yow to pacience [2697] ¶ fforther-
 moore / ye sholde enforee yow / to haue pacience / [2698]
 considerynge / that the tribulaciõs of this world / but
 litel while endure / and soone passed been and goone
 [2699] ¶ And the ioye that a man / seketh to haue by
 pacience in tribulaciõs / is perdurable / after that the

¶ Poeta

¶ Gregorius

¶ Petrus in epis-
tolis

Apostle seith in his epistle [2700] ¶ The ioye of god / he seith is *perdurable* / that is to seyn *euerelastyng*e [2701] ¶ Also troweþ and bileueth stedefastly / that he nys nat wel ynorissed ne wel ytaught that kan nat haue pacience / or wol nat receyue pacience: [2702] ffor Salomon seith ¶ That the doctrine and the wit of a man / is knowen by pacience [2703] ¶ And in another place he seith ¶ that he that is pacient. *gouerneth* hym by greet *prudence* [2704] ¶ And the same Salomon seith The angry and wrathful man / maketh noyses / And the pacient man atempreth hem and stilleth [2705] ¶ He seith also / It is moore worth to be pacient than for to be right strong. [2706] And he that may haue the lordshipe of his owene herte / is moore to preyse / than he that by his force or strengthe taketh grete Citees [2707] ¶ And therefore / seith Seint Iame in his Epistle ¶ That pacience / is a greet *vertu* of *perfeccioñ*

¶ *Apostolus in epistola*¶ *Salomon*¶ *Iacobus in epistola*

[2708] ¶ Certes quod Melibee /. I graunte yow Dame Prudence / that pacience / is a greet *vertu* of *perfeccioñ* / [2709] but euery man may nat haue the *perfeccioñ* þat ye seken / [2710] ne I nam nat of the nombre / of right *parfite* men / [2711] for myn ¹herte / may neuere been in pees / vn-to the tyme it be venged / [2712] And al be it so that it was greet *peril* to myne enemys / to do me a vileynye / in takyng *vengeance* vp-on me /. [2713] yet taken they noon heede of the *peril* / but fulfilleden / hir wikked wyl and hir corage [2714] ¶ And therefore / me thynketh men oghten nat repreue me / though I putte me in a litel *peril* for to venge me / [2715] And though .I. do a greet *excesse* / that is to seyn / that I venge oon *outrage* by another

¶ *Melibee*¶ *Prudence*

[2716] A quod dame Prudence / ye seyn youre wyl / and as yow liketh / [2717] but in no caas of the world / a man sholde nat doon *outrage* ne *excesse* / for to vengen hym [2718] ¶ ffor Cassidore seith ¶ That as yuele dooth he that vengeth hym by *outrage* / as he that dooth the

¶ *Cassidorus*

outrage ||. [2719] And therefore / ye shul venge yow / after
 the ordre of right / that is to seyn by the lawe / and noght
 by excesse ne by outrage [2720] ¶ And also / If ye wol
 venge yow of the outrage of youre Aduersaries in oother
 manere than right comandeth / ye synnen! [2721] And
 therefore seith Senec ||. That a man shal neuere vengen
 shrewednesse / by shrewednesse [2722] ¶ And if ye seye /
 that right axeth / a man to defenden violence by violence /
 and fightyng' by fightyng' [2723] Certes / ye seye sooth
 whan the defense is doon anon with-uten Interualle or
 with-uten tariyng' or delay [2724] for to deffenden hym /
 and nat for to vengen hym! [2725] ¶ And it bihoueth /
 that a man putte swich attemperance in his deffense!
 [2726] that men haue no cause ne matiere / to repreuen
 hym that deffendeth hym of excesse and outrage / for ellis
 were it agayn resoñ [2727] ¶ Pardee / ye knowen wel /
 that ye maken no deffense as now / for to deffende yow
 but for to venge yow / [2728] and so sheweth it that ye
 han no wyl to do youre dede attemprely ||. [2729] And
 therefore / me thynketh that pacience is good || ffor Salomon
 seith ¶ That he that is nat pacient' shal haue greet
 harm

¶ Salomon

¶ Melibee

[2730] Certes quod Melibee / I graunte yow / that
 whan a man is inpacient' and wrooth / of that' pat' toucheth
 hym noght' and that aperteneth nat vn-to hym / though it
 harme hym / it is no wonder || [2731] ffor the lawe seith ||
 That he is coupable that entremetteth or medleth / with
 swyche thyng' as aperteneth nat vn-to hym [2732] ¶ And
 Salomon seith || That he that entremetteth hym of the
 noyse or strif / of another man / is lyk' to hym / that taketh
 an hound by the eris || [2733] ffor right' as he that taketh
 a straunge hound by the eris / is outhertwhile / biten with
 the hound [2734] Right in the same wise is it resoñ / that
 he haue harm / that by his inpacience / medleth hym / of
 the noyse of another man / where-as it aperteneth nat vn-to
 hym [2735] ¶ But ye knowen wel / that this dede / that

¶ Salomon

is to seyn / my grief and my disese / toucheth me right
 ny ||. [2736] And therefore / though I be wrooth and in-
 patient. it is no merueille / [2737] And sauynge youre
 grace / I kan nat seen / that it myghte greetly harme me /
 though I tooke vengeance / [2738] for I am richer / and
 moore myghty than myne enemys been / [2739] And wel
 knowen ye / that by moneye and by hauynge grete posses-
 sions / been alle the thynges of this world gouerned [2740]
 ¶ And Salomon seith ¶ That alle thynges / obeyen to ¶ Salomon
 moneye /.

[2741] Whan Prudence / hadde herd hir housbonde ¶ Prudence
 auanten hym of his richesse and of his moneye / dispreis-
 ynge the power of hise Aduersaries / she spak/ and seyde in
 this wise [2742] ¶ Certes / deere sire I graunte yow that
 ye been riche and myghty / [2743] and that the richesces
 been goode / to hem þat han hem wel ygeten hem / and
 wel konne vsen hem ||. [2744] ffor ¹right as the body of a
 man / may nat lyuen with-oute the soule / namoore may it
 lyue / with-uten temporeel goodes / [2745] And for rich-
 esses / may a man gete hym grete freendes [2746] ¶ And
 therefore seith Pamphilles ¶ If a netherdes doghter seith ¶ Pamphilles
 he / be riche / she may chesen of a thousand men / [*lequel
 quelle veult pour mary* (MS Reg. 19 C. vii, lf 140)] [2747] for
 of a thousand men / oon wol nat forsaken hire ne refusen
 hire [2748] ¶ And this Pamphilles seith also ¶ If thou be
 right happy /. that is to seyn / If thou be right riche / thou
 shalt fynde a greet nombre of felawes and freendes ||. [2749]
 And if thy ffortune change / that thou wexe poure / fare-
 wel / freendshipe and felaweshipe / [2750] for thou shalt be
 al alloone with-uten any compaignye / but if it be / the
 compaignye of poure folk [2751] ¶ And yet seith / this
 Pamphilles moreouer ¶ That they that been thralle and
 bonde of lynage shullen been maad worthy and noble by
 the richesces [2752] ¶ And right so / as by richesces / ther
 comen manye goodes /. right so by pouerte come ther
 manye harmes and yueles /. [2753] for greet pouerte con-

streyneth a man / to do manye yueles /. [2754] And ther-
 ¶ Cassidorus fore / clepeth Cassidore / pouerte / the mooder of Ruyne /
 [2755] that is to seyn / the mooder of ouerthrowynge or
 ¶ Petrus Alfonce fallynge doun [2756] ¶ And therefore seith Piers Alfonce ||
 Oon of the gretteste Aduersitees of this world^k is / [2757]
 whan a free man / by kynde or by burthe is constreyned
 by pouerte to eten the Almesse of his enemy [2758] ¶ And
 ¶ Innocencius the same seith Innocent^t in oon of hise bookes ||. he seith /
 that sorweful and myshappy / is the condicioñ of a poure
 beggere / [2759] for if he axe nat his mete / he dyeth for
 hunger /. [2760] And if he axe / he dyeth for shame /
 And algates necessitee constreyneth hym to axe [2761]
 ¶ Salomon ¶ And therefore seith Salomon || That bet it is to dye / than
 for to haue swich pouerte! [2762] ¶ And as the same Salo-
 mon seith ¶ Better it is to dye of bitter deeth than for to
 lyuen / in swich wise [2763] ¶ By thise resons / that I
 haue seid vn-to yow / and by manye othere resons that I
 koude seye^s / [2764] I graunte yow / that richesces been
 goode to hem / that geten hem wel / and to hem that wel
 vsen tho richesces [2765] ¶ And therefore wol I shewe
 yow / hou ye shul haue yow / and how ye shul bere yow
 in gaderynge of richesces / and in what manere / ye shul
 vsen hem

[2766] ¶ ffirst^t ye shul geten hem with-outen greet
 desir / by good leyser sekyngly / and nat^t ouer hastily /
 [2767] ffor a man that is to desiryng to gete richesces /
 abaundoneth hym first to thefte / and to alle other yueles
 ¶ Salomon [2768] ¶ And therefore seith Salomon ¶ He that hasteth
 hym to bisily / to wexe riche shal be noon Innocent^t [2769]
 ¶ He seith also /. that the richesce that hastily cometh to
 a man / soone and lightly / gooth and passeth fro a man
 [2770] ¶ but that richesce / that cometh litel and litel
 vexeth alwey and multiplieth [2771] ¶ And sire / ye shul
 geten richesces / by youre wit^t and by youre trauaille vn-to
 youre profit^t. [2772] and that with-outen wrong^t or harm
 doynge / to any oother persone [2773] ¶ ffor the lawe

seith / that ther maketh no man himseluen riche / if he do
 harm to another wight || [2774] This is to seyn / that
 nature deffendeth and forbedeth by right that no man
 make hym-self riche / vn-to the harm of another persone
 [2775] ¶ And Tullius seith || þat no sorwe / ne no drede
 of deeth / ne no thyng that may falle vn-to a man / [2776]
 is so muchel agayns nature / as a man to encressen his
 owene profit to the harm of another man || [2777] And though
 the grete men ¹and the myghty men geten riches moore
 lightly than thou /. [2778] yet shaltou nat been ydel ne
 slow to do thy profit. for thou shalt in alle wise flee ydel-
 nesse [2779] ¶ ffor Salomon seith /. that ydelnesse / techeth
 a man to do manye yueles [2780] ¶ And the same Salomon
 seith || That he that trauaileth and bisieth hym to tilien
 his land / shal eten breed [2781] but he that is ydel / and
 casteth hym to no bisynesse ne ocupacioñ / shal falle in-to
 pouerte / and dye for hunger [2782] ¶ And he that is
 ydel and slow / kan neuere fynde couenable tyme for to
 doon his profit. [2783] ffor ther is a versifour seith / that
 the ydel man excuseth hym in wynter / by cause of the
 grete coold and in somer / by enchesoñ of the heete ||.
 [2784] ffor these causes seip Caton ||. waketh and enclyneth
 nat yow ouer muchel / for to slepe / for ouer muchel reste
 norisseth and causeth manye vices ||. [2785] And therefore /
 seith Seint Ierome ||. Dooth somme goodes / that the deuel /
 which is oure enemy / ne fynde yow nat vnocupied ||.
 [2786] ffor the deuel ne taketh nat lightly vn-to his werk-
 ynge swiche as he fyndeth occupied in goode werkes

¶ Tullius

¶ Salomon

¶ Vnde versifi-
cator

¶ Cato

¶ Sanctus Ieron-
imus

[2787] ¶ Thanne thus / In getynge riches / ye
 mosten flee ydelnesse ||. [2788] And afterward ye shul vse
 the riches / whiche ye haue geten by youre wit and by
 youre trauaille / [2789] in swich a manere / that men
 holde nat yow / to scars ne to sparynge ne to fool large /
 that is to seyn / ouer large a spender / [2790] for right as
 men blamen an Auaricious man / by cause / of his scarsetee
 and chyngerie / [2791] In the same wise is he to blame

that spendeth ouer largely ||. [2792] And therefore seith
 Cato ¶ Vse he seith / thy riches that thou hast gotten
 [2793] in swich a manere / that men haue / no matiere ne
 cause / to calle thee / neiþer wrecche ne chynche / [2794]
 for it is a greet shame to a man / to haue a pouere herte
 and a riche purs [2795] ¶ He seith also / the goodes that
 thou hast ygeten / vse hem by mesure / that is to seyn /
 spende hem mesurably / [2796] for they that folily / wasten
 and despenden / the goodes that they han s [2797] whan
 they han namoore propre of hir owene / they shapen hem
 to take the goodes of another man [2798] ¶ I seye thanne /
 that ye shul fleen Auarice / [2799] vsynge youre riches /
 in swich manere / that men seye nat þat youre riches
 been yburyed / [2800] but þat ye haue hem in youre
 myght and in youre weeldynge [2801] ¶ ffor a wys man /
 repreueth the Auaricious man / and seith thus / in two
 vers [2802] ¶ Wherto and why / burieth a man his
 goodes by his grete Auarice / and knoweth wel that nedes
 moste he dye / [2803] for deeth is the ende of euery man /
 as in this present lyf [2804] ¶ And for what cause / or
 encheson ioyneth he hym / or knytteth he hym / so faste
 vn-to his goodes / [2805] that alle his wittes mowen nat
 disseueren hym / or departen hym from his goodes /
 [2806] and knoweth wel / or oghte knowe / that whan he
 is deed / he shal no thyng bere with hym / out of this
 world [2807] ¶ And therfore seith seint Augustyn || That
 the Auaricious man is likned vn-to helle / [2808] that the
 moore it swelweth / the moore desir it hath to swelwe and
 deuoure / [2809] And as wel / as ye wolde eschewe / to be
 called an Auaricious man / or chynche / [2810] as wel
 sholde ye kepe yow and gouerne yow / in swich a wise /
 that men calle yow nat fool large [2811] ¶ Therefore seith
 Tullius ||. The goodes he seith of thyn hous / ne sholde
 nat been hyd / ne kept so cloos ¹but that they myghte
 been opened by pitee and debonairetee [2812] ¶ that is to
 seyn / to yeuen part to hem that han greet nede /. [2813]

¶ Cato

¶ Vnde versifi-
cator

¶ Augustinus

¶ Tullius

ne thy goodes / shullen nat been so opene / to been euery
mannes goodes [2814] ¶ Afterward / in getyng of youre
richesses / and in vsynge hem / ye shul alwey / haue thre
thynges in youre herte / . [2815] that is to seyn / Oure lord
god / Conscience / and good name [2816] ¶ ffirst / ye shul
haue god in youre herte / [2817] and for no richesse / ye
shullen do no thyng. which may in any manere displese
god / that is youre creatour and makere [2818] ¶ ffor after
the word of Salomon ¶ It is better to haue a litel good ¶ Salomon
with the loue of god / [2819] than to haue / muchel good
and tresour / and lese the loue of his lord god [2820]
¶ And the prophete seith || That better it is / to been a ¶ Propheta
good man and haue litel good and tresour / [2821] than to
been holden a shrewe / and haue grete richesses [2822]
¶ And yet seye I ferthermoore / that ye sholde alwey
doon youre bisynesse to gete yow richesses / [2823] so that
ye gete hem with good conscience [2824] ¶ And thapostle ¶ Apostolus
seith ||. that ther nys thyng in this world / of which / we
sholden haue so greet ioye / as whan oure Conscience bereth
vs good witesse [2825] ¶ And the wise man seith || The ¶ Sapiens
substance of a man is ful good / whan synne is nat in
mannes conscience [2826] ¶ Afterward in getyng of youre
richesses / and in vsynge of hem / [2827] yow moste haue
greet bisynesse and greet diligence / that youre goode
name / be alwey kept and conserued ||. [2828] ffor salo- ¶ Salomon
mon seith / . that better it is / and moore it auailleth a man
to haue a good name / than for to haue grete richesses^s
[2829] And therefore / he seith in another place ¶ Do greet
diligence seith Salomon / in keypyng of thy freend / and of
thy goode name / [2830] for it shal lenger abide with
thee / than any tresour / be it neuer so precious [2831]
¶ And certes he sholde nat be called a gentil man / that
after god and good conscience / alle thynges left. ne dooth
his diligence and bisynesse / to kepen his good name
[2832] ¶ And Cassidore seith ¶ That it is signe of gentil ¶ Cassidorus
herte^s whan a man loueth and desireth to han a good name

¶ Augustinus

[2833] ¶ And therefore seith Seint Augustyn ¶ That ther
 been two thynges / that' arn necessarie and nedefulle /
 [2834] and that is good Conscience and good loos / [2835]
 þat is to seyn / good Conscience / to thyn owene persone
 inward / and good loos for thy neighebre outward /
 [2836] And he that trusteth hym so muchel in his goode
 conscience / [2837] that he displeseth / and setteth at
 noght his goode name or loos / and rekketh noght though
 he kepe nat his goode name / nys but a crueel cherl /

[2838] Sire / now haue I shewed yow / how ye shul
 do in getyngne riches / and how / ye shullen vsen hem /
 [2839] and I se wel / that for the trust' that ye han in
 youre riches / ye wole moeue werre and bataille [2840]
 ¶ I conseille yow / that ye bigynne no werre / in trust' of
 youre riches / for they ne suffisen noght' werres to mayn-
 tene [2841] ¶ And therefore / seith a Philosopre ¶ That

¶ Philosophus

man / that' desireth / and wole algates han werre / shal
 neuere haue suffisaunce / [2842] for the richer that he is /
 the gretter despenses moste he make / if he wole haue wor-
 shipe and victorie [2843] ¶ And Salomon seith ||. That the

¶ Salomon

gretter riches that a man hath / the mo despendours he
 hath [2844] ¶ And deere sire / al be it so / that for youre
 riches / ye mowe haue muchel folk' [2845] yet bihoueth
 it nat'. ne it is nat good to bigynne werre / where as ye
 mowe in oother manere / haue pees vn-to youre worshipe
 and ¹profit [2846] ¶ ffor the victories of batailles that been
 in this world' / lyen nat' in gret nombre or multitude of
 the peple / ne in the vertu of man / [2847] but it lith in
 the wyl / and in the hand of oure lord god almyghty
 [2848] ¶ And therefore / Iudas Machabeus / which was
 goddes knyght'. [2849] whan he sholde fighte agayn his
 aduersarie that hadde a greet nombre / and a gretter mul-
 titude of folk / and strengre than was this peple of Macha-
 bee /. [2850] yet he reconforted his litel compaignye / and
 seyde right in this wise [2851] ¶ Als lightly quod he /
 may oure lord god almyghty yeue victorie to a fewe folk'

as to many folk. [2852] for the victorie of a bataile comth nat^t by the grete nombre of peple / [2853] but it come / from cure lord god of heuene [2854] ¶ And deere sire / for as muchel / as ther is no man *certein* / if he be worthy / that god yeue hym victorie [*ne plus que il est certain se il est digne de l'amour de Dieu* (Le Ménagier, i. 226)] or naught / . After that Salomon seith / [2855] therefore / euery man sholde greetly ¶ Salomon drede werres to bigynne / [2856] ¶ And by cause / that in batailles / fallen manye perils / [2857] and happeth outhur while / that as soone is the grete man slayn as the lital man / . [2858] And as it is writen / in the seconde book of ¶ In .ij. de libro kynges The dedes of batailles been auenturouse / and no Regum thyng *certeyne* / [2859] for as lightly is oon hurt^t with a spere as another^r ¶. [2860] And for ther is gret peril in werre / therefore / sholde a man flee and eschue werre / in as muchel as a man may goodly ¶. [2861] ffor Salomon ¶ Salomon seith / . He that loueth *peril* shal falle in *peril*

[2862] After that Dame Prudence / hadde spoken in ¶ Melibee this manere / Melibee answerde and seyde [2863] ¶ I see wel dame Prudence that by youre faire wordes / and by youre resoñs that ye han shewed me / that the werre liketh yow no thyng^t. [2864] but I haue nat yet^t herd youre conseil / how I shal do in this nede

[2865] Certes quod she I conseilte yow / that ye ¶ Prudence accorde with youre aduersaries / and that ye haue pees with hem [2866] ¶ ffor Seint Iame seith / in hise epistles ¶ Sanctus Iacobus in epistolis ¶ That by concord and pees / the smale riches wexen grete / [2867] and by debaat^t and discord^t / the grete riches fallen doun [2868] ¶ And ye knowen wel that oon of the gretteste and moost souereyn thyng^t. that is in this world / is vnytee and pees [2869] ¶ And therefore / seyde oure lord ¶ Dominus Apostolis suis Ihesu *crist*^t to hise Apostles in this wise [2870] ¶ wel happy and blessed been they / that^t louen and purchacen pees / for they been called children of god [2871] A quod Melibee / . now se I wel / that ye louen nat myn honour / ¶ Melibee ne my worshipe [2872] ¶ Ye knowen wel that myne

Aduersaries / han bigonnen this debaat and bryge / by hire outrage / [2873] and ye se wel that they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees / ne they asken nat to be reconciled [2874] ¶ wol ye thanne / that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem and crie hem mercy ?/. [2875] ffor sothe / that were nat my worshipe [2876] ffor right as men seyn / that ouer greet hoomlynesse / engendreth dispreisyng / so fareth it by to greet humylitee or mekenesse

¶ Prudence

[2877] Thanne bigan dame Prudence / to maken semblant of wratthe / and seyde [2878] ¶ Certes sire / sauf youre grace / I loue youre honour and youre profit as I do myn owene / and euere haue doon / [2879] ne ye ne noon oother / syen neuere the contrarie [2880] ¶ And yit if I hadde seyde / that ye sholde han purchaced the pees / and the reconciliacion /. I ne hadde nat muchel mystaken me / ne seyde amys /. [2881] ffor the wise man seip ¶ The dissension / bigynneth by another man / and the reconciling by-gynneth by thy self [2882] ¶ And the prophete seith ||. flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse / [2883] seke pees and folwe it as muchel as in thee is [2884] ¶ Yet seye I nat that ye shul rather pursue to youre Aduersaries for pees than they shuln to yow ||. [2885] for I knowe wel / that ye been so hard-herted / that ye wol do no thyng for me [2886] ¶ And Salomon seith ||. he that hath ouer hard an herte / atte laste / he shal myshappe and mystyde

¶ Sapiens

¶ propheta

¶ Salomon

¶ Melibee

[2887] Whanne Melibee hadde herd dame Prudence maken semblant of wratthe / he seyde in this wise [2888] ¶ Dame I prey yow that ye be nat displeed / of thynges that I seye [2889] for ye knowe wel that I am angry and wrooth / and that is no wonder / [2890] and they that been wrothe / witen nat wel / what they don ne what they seyn [2891] ¶ Therefore / the prophete seith ¶ That troubled eyen / han no cleer sighte [2892] ¶ but seyeth and conseileth me as yow liketh / for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire / [2893] and if ye repreue me of my folye / I am the moore holden / to loue yow and preyse

¶ propheta

yow [2894] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. That he þat repreueth ¶ Salomon
 hym that dooth folye / [2895] he shal fynde gretter grace
 than he / that deceyueth hym by sweete wordes

[2896] Thanne seide dame Prudence ¶ I make no
 semblant of wratthe ne Anger / but for youre grete profit
 [2897] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. He is moore worth that re- ¶ Salomon
 preueth / or chideth a fool for his folye shewynge hym
 semblant of wratthe / [2898] than he that supporteth hym
 and p[r]eyseth hym in his mysdoynge and laugheth at his
 folye [2899] ¶ And this same Salomon / seith afterwarð .||.
 That by the sorweful visage of a man / that is to seyn / by
 the sory and heuy contenañce of a man / [2900] the fool
 correcteth and amendeth hym self

[2901] Thanne seyde Melibee ¶ I shal nat konne an- ¶ Melibee
 swere to so manye faire resoñs / as ye putten to me and
 shewen / [2902] seyeth shortly youre wyl and youre con-
 seil / and I am al redy to fulfille and parfourne it

[2903] Thanne dame Prudence / discouered al hir wyl ¶ Prudence
 to hym / and seyde [2904] ¶ I conseille yow quod she
 abouen alle thynges / that ye make pees / bitwene god and
 yow / [2905] and beth reconsiled vn-to hym and to his
 grace || [2906] ffor as I haue seyde yow heer biforn /. god
 hath suffred yow to haue this tribulacioñ and disese for
 youre synnes / [2907] And if ye do as I sey yow / god wol
 sende youre Aduersaries vn-to yow [2908] and maken hem
 fallen at youre feet redy to do youre wyl and youre com-
 andementz [2909] ¶ ffor Salomon seith ||. whan the con- ¶ Salomon
 dicioñ of man is plesaunt and likynge to god /. [2910] he
 chaungeth the hertes of the mannes Aduersaries and con-
 streyneth hem / to biseken hym / of pees and of grace /
 [2911] and I prey yow / lat me speke with youre Aduersaries
 in priuée place / [2912] for they shul nat knowe / that it
 be of youre wyl / or youre assent. [2913] and thanne whan
 I knowe / hir wil and hire entente /. I may conseille yow
 the moore seurely

[2914] Dame quod Melibee / dooth youre wil and ¶ Melibee

your^e likyng^e /. [2915] for I putte me hoolly / in your^e disposicioⁿ and ordinaunce

¶ Prudence

[2916] **T**hanne Dame Prudence / whan she saugh the goode wyl of hir housbonde / delibered and took auys in hir self. [2917] thinkinge / how she myghte bryng^e this nede / vn-to a good conelusion / and to a good ende /. [2918] And whan she saugh hir tyme / she sente for thise Aduersaries / to come vn-to hire in to a pryuee place / [2919] and shewed wisely vn-to hem / the grete goodes that comen of pees / [2920] and the grete har^mes and perils / that been in werre / [2921] and seyde to hem / in a goodly manere /. hou that hem oughten / haue greet repentaunce / [2922] of the Iniurie *and* wrong^t that they hadden doon / to Melibee hir lord / and to hire / And to hire doghter

[2923] **A**nd whan they herden the goodliche wordes of Dame Prudence / [2924] they weren so supprised and rauysshed / and hadden so greet ioye of hire / that wonder was to telle [2925] ¶ A lady quod they / ye han shewed vn-to vs / the blessing^e of swetnesse / after the sawe of Dauid the prophete / [2926] for the reconsilyng^e / which we been nat worthy to haue in no manere / [2927] but^t we oghte requeren it^t with greet contricioⁿ and humylitee / [2928] ye of your^e grete goodnesse haue presented vnto vs [2929] ¶ Now se we wel / that the science and the konnyng^e of Salomon is ful trewe [2930] ¶ ffor he seith || That sweete wordes / multiplien and encreesen freendes / and maken shrewes / to be debonaire and meeke

[2931] ¶ Certes quod they ./ we putten oure dede and al oure matere and cause / al hoolly / in your^e goode wyl / [2932] and been redy to obeye to the speche and comandement^t of my lord Melibee [2933] ¶ And therefore deere and benygne lady / we preien yow and biseke yow as mekely as we konne and mowen / [2934] that it lyke vn-to your^e grete goodnesse / to fulfillen in dede / your^e goodliche wordes / [2935] for we consideren and knowelichen /

that we han offended and greued my lord Melibee out of
 mesure /. [2936] so ferforth / that we be nat of power / to
 maken hise amendes / [2937] and therefore / we oblige and
 bynden vs and oure freendes / to doon al his wyl and hise
 comandementz || [2938] ¶ but *peraventure* / he hath swich
 heuynesse / and swich wratthe to vs ward / by cause of oure
 offense / [2939] that he wole enioyne vs swich a peyne /
 as we mowe nat bere ne susteene /. [2940] and therefore
 noble lady / we biseke / to youre wommanly pitee / [2941]
 to taken swich auysement in this nede / that we / ne oure
 freendes / be nat desherited ne destroyed / thurgħ oure
 folye

[2942] Certes quod Prudence / it is an hard thyng and ¶ Prudence
 right perilous / [2943] that a man putte hym al outrely /
 in the arbitracioñ and Iuggement. and in the mygħt and
 power of hise enemys [2944] ¶ ffor Salomon seith || Lecueth ¶ Salomon
 me / and yeueth credence / to that I shal seyn ¶ I seye
quod he ¶ ye peple / folk and gouernours of hooly chirche
 [2945] ¶ to thy sone / to thy wyf / to thy freend / ne to
 thy broother / [2946] ne yeue thou neuere mygħt ne
 maistrie of thy body / whil thou lyuest. [2947] ¶ Now
 sithen he deffendeth / that man shal nat yeuen to his
 broother / ne to his freend / the mygħt of his body s
 [2948] by strengre reson he deffendeth / and forbedeth a
 man / to yeuen hym self to his enemy [2949] ¶ And nathe-
 lees I conseilte you / that ye / mystruste nat my lord /
 [2950] for I woot wel / and knowe verrailly / that he is /
 debonaire and meeke / large / curteys / [2951] and no
 thyng desirous ne coueitous of good ne richesse [2952]
 ¶ for ther nys no thyng in this world that he desireth /
 saue oonly / worshiþe and honour [2953] ¶ fforther-moore
 I knowe wel / and am right seur / that he shal no thyng
 doon in this nede / with-outen my conseil / [2954] And I
 shal so werken in this cause / that by grace of oure lord
 god / ye shul been reconciled vn-to vs

[2955] Thanne seyden they / with o. ¹voys || worshipful

lady we putten vs and oure goodes al fully in youre wil
and disposicioñ / [2956] and been redy / to comen / what
day þat it like vn-to youre noblesse to lymyte vs or assigne
vs [2957] for to maken oure obligacioñ and boond^t as strong^t
as it liketh vn-to youre goodnesse / [2958] that we mowe
fulfille the wille of yow / and of my lord Melibee

¶ Prudence

[2959] Whan Dame Prudence / hadde herd the an-
sweres of thise men / she bad hem / goon agayn priuely /
[2960] and she retourned to hir lord Melibee / and tolde
hym / how she foond hise Aduersaries ful repentant^t [2961].
knowelechyng ful lowely hir synnes and trespas / and how
they were redy to suffren añ peyne / [2962] requiryng *and*
preiynge hym of *mercy* and pitee :

¶ Melibee

[2963] Thanne seyde Melibee ¶ he is wel worthy to
haue pardoñ and foryifnesse of his synne þat excuseth nat
his synne / [2964] but knowelecheth it *and* repenteth
hym / axinge Indulgence [2965] ¶ ffor Senec / seith ||. ther
is the remissioñ *and* foryifnesse. where as confessioñ is
[2966] ¶ ffor Confessioñ is neighebre to Innocence [2967]
[*et dit autre part: celui est presque innocent qui a honte de
son péchié et le reconnoist.* (Le Ménagier, i. 231)].
And therefore I assente and corforme me to haue pees /
[2968] but it is good þat we do it^t nat *with-ouen* the assent
and wyl of oure freendes

¶ Prudence

[2969] Thanne was Prudence right glad and ioyeful /
and seyde [2970] ¶ Certes sire quod she ye han wel *and*
goodly answered^t [2971] ffor right^t as by the conseil /
assent^t and helpe of youre freendes / ye han been stired /
to venge yow *and* maken werre s [2972] right so with-
outen hire conseil / shul ye nat accorden yow / ne haue
pees with youre Aduersaries [2973] ¶ ffor the lawe seith ||
ther nys no thyng^t-so good by wey of kynde / as a thyng^t
to been vnbounde by hym þat it was ybounde

[2974] ¶ And thanne Dame Prudence with-ouen delay
or taryng / sente anon hire messages for hire kyn *and* for
hire olde freendes / whiche þat were trewe and wyse / [2975]

and tolde hem by ordre / in the presence of Melibee al
 this mateere as it is abouen expressed *and* declared / [2976]
 and preyden þat they wolde yeuen hire auys *and* con-
 seil / what best were to doon in this nede [2977] ¶ And
 whan Melibees freendes hadde taken hire auys *and* deliber-
 acioñ of the forseide mateere / [2978] *and* hadden examyned
 it by greet bisynesse *and* greet diligence / [2979] they yaued
 ful conseil for to haue pees and reste / [2980] and þat
 Melibee / sholde receyue *with* good herte hise aduersaries /
 to foryifnesse and *mercy*

[2981] And whan dame Prudence hadde herd the
 assent^t of hir lord Melibee / and the conseil of hise freendes
 [2982] accorde *with* hire wille and hire entencioñ / [2983]
 she was wonderly glad in hire herte / and seyde [2984]
 ¶ Ther is an old *prouerbe* quod she seith ||. That the
 goodnesse þat thou mayst do this day / do it [2985] and
 abide nat^t ne delaye it nat^t til to morwe [2986] ¶ And
 therefore / I conseille þat ye sende youre messages swiche
 as been discrete and wise / [2987] vn-to youre Aduersaries /
 tellynge hem on youre bihalue / [2988] þat if they wole
 trete of pees *and* of accord^t / [2989] that they shape hem /
 with-uten delay or tariyng^t to comen vn-to vs / [2990]
 which thyng^t parfourned was in dede [2991] ¶ And
 whanne these trespassours and repentyng^e folk^t of hire
 folies / that is to seyn / the Aduersaries of Melibee / [2992]
 hadden herd / what these Messagers seyden vn-to hem /
 [2993] they weren right glad *and* ioyeful / and answereden
 ful mekely *and* benignely / [2994] yeldyng^e graces *and*
 thankynges to hir lord Melibee *and* to al his compaignye /
 [2995] *and* shopen hem with-uten delay to go *with* the
 Messagers *and* obeye to the comandement^t of hir lord
 Melibee

¶ Prudence

[2996] ¶ And right anon / they taken hire wey to the
 Court of Melibee / [2997] and tooken *with* hem / somme
 of hire trewe freendes / to maken feith for hem *and* for to
 been hire borwes / [2998] and whan they were comen / ¹to

¶ Melibee

the presence of Melibee / he seyde hem thise wordes
 [2999] It standeth thus quod Melibee / and sooth it is /
 that ye [3000] causelees and *with-uten* skile *and* resoñ
 [3001] han doon grete Iniuries *and* wronges / to me and
 to my wyf Prudence: and to my doghter also / [3002] for
 ye han entred in to myn hous by violence [3003] and haue
 doon swich outrage þat alle men knowen wel þat ye haue
 disserued the deeth / [3004] and therefore / wol I knowe
 and wite of yow / [3005] wheither ye wol putte the
 punyusement *and* the chastisyng / *and* the vengeance of
 this outrage / in the wyl of me / and of my wyf Prudence /
 or ye wol nat

[3006] Thanne / the wiseste of hem thre answerde for
 hem alle and seyde [3007] ¶ Sire quod he / we knowen
 wel / þat we been vnworthy / to comen vn-to the Court
 of so greet a lord and so worthy as ye been s [3008] ffor
 we han so greetly mystaken vs / and han offended and agilt
 in swich a wise / agayn youre heigh lordshipe / [3009] that
 trewely / we han disserued the deeth / [3010] but yet for
 the grete goodnesse and debonairetee þat al the world /
 witnesseth in youre persone / [3011] we submytten vs / to
 the excellence *and* benignitee of youre gracious lordshipe /
 [3012] and been redy to obeie to alle youre comandementz /
 [3013] bisekyng yow / that of youre merciable pitee / ye
 wol considere oure grete repentañce *and* lough submyssioñ
 [3014] *and* graunten vs foryeuenesse of oure outrageous
 trespas *and* offense / [3015] for wel we knowe þat youre
 liberal grace *and* mercy / stretchen hem ferther in-to good-
 nesse / than doon oure outrageouse giltes and trespas in-to
 wikkednesse / [3016] al be it þat cursedly *and* damp-
 nablyly / we han agilt agayn youre heigh lordshipe

[3017] Thanne Melibee / took hem vp fro the ground
 ful benignely [3018] *and* receyued hire obligacioñs *and* hir
 boondes by hire othes vp-on hire plegges *and* borwes / [3019]
 and assigned hem a certeyn day / to retourne vn-to his
 Court. [3020] for to accepte *and* receyue the sentence *and*

Iuggement^t þat Melibee wolde comande to be doon on hem by the causes aforesayd / [3021] whiche thynges ordeyned /. euery man retourned to his hous ||

[3022] And whan þat dame Prudence saugh hir tyme / she freyned *and* axed hir lord^t Melibee / [3023] what vengeance / he thoughte / to taken of hise Aduersaries

[3024] To which Melibee answerde *and* seyde ¶ Certes ¶ Melibee quod he / I thynke *and* purpose me fully / [3025] to desherite hem / of al þat euere they han / and for to putte hem / in exil for euere


[3026] Certes quod dame Prudence / this were a cruell ¶ Prudence sentence and muchel agayn resoñ / [3027] ffor ye been riche ynough and han no nede of oother mennes good / [3028] and ye mygh^te lightly in this wise gete yow a coueitous name / [3029] which is a vicious thyng^t *and* oghte been eschued of euery good man [3030] ffor after the sawe of the word of the Apostle /. Coueitise is roote of alle harmes / ¶ Apostolus [3031] And therefore it were bettere for yow / to lese so muchel good of youre owene / than for to taken of hir good in this manere / [3032] for bettere it is to lesen with worshipe / than it is to wynne *with* vileynye *and* shame /. [3033] And eueri man oghte to doon his diligence *and* his bisynesse / to geten hym a good name /. [3034] And yet shal he nat only bisie hym in kepyng of his good name. [3035] but he shal also enforcen hym alwey / to do som thyng^t by which he may renouelle his good name / [3036] for it is writen / þat the olde good loos *and* good name of a man / is soone goon and passed / whan it is nat newed ne renouelled [3037] ¶ And as touchynge / þat ye seyn / ye wole exile youre Aduersaries / [3038] that thynketh me / muchel agayn resoñ / and out of ¹mesure / [3039] considered the power þat they han yeue yow vp-on hem self ||. [3040] And it is writen þat he is worthy / to lesen his priuilege / þat mysuseth / the mygh^t *and* the power þat is yeuen hym [3041] ¶ And I sette cas / ye mygh^te enioyne hem þat peyne by right *and* by lawe / [3042] which I

trowe / ye mowe nat do /. [3043] I seye ye mighte nat
 putten it to execucion *per-aventure* / [3044] and thanne
 were it likly to retourne to the werre as it was biforn /
 [3045] And therfore / if ye wole þat men do yow obeis-
 ance / ye moste deemen moore curteisly / [3046] this is to
 seyn / ye moste yeuen moore esy sentences *and* Iuggementz.
 [3047] ¶ ffor it is writen / þat he þat moost curteisly
 comandeth / to hym men moost obeyen / [3048] And ther-
 fore I prey yow þat in this necessitee / *and* in this nede /
 ye caste yow to ouercome youre herte [3049] ¶ ffor Seneca
 seith /. That he þat ouercometh his herte / ouercomeþ
 twies [3050] ¶ And Tullius seith ¶ Ther is no thyng so
 comendable in a greet lord / [3051] as whan he is debon-
 aire *and* meeke / and appeseth lightly / [3052] And I. prey
 yow þat ye wole forbere now to do vengeance [3053] in
 swich a manere / þat youre goode name may be kept *and*
 conserued / [3054] and þat men mowe haue cause and
 mateere / to preyse yow of pitee *and* of mercy / [3055] and
 þat ye haue no cause to repente yow of thyng þat ye doon
 [3056] ¶ ffor Seneca seith ¶ He ouercometh in an yuel
 manere þat repenteth hym of his victorie / [3057] Wher-
 fore I pray yow / lat mercy been in youre mynde *and* in
 youre herte / [3058] to theeffect *and* entente þat god
 almyghty haue mercy on yow in his laste Iuggement: [3059]
 ¶ ffor seint Iame seith in his Epistle ¶ Iuggement with-
 outen mercy shal be doon to hym / þat hath no mercy of
 another wight

[3060] Whanne Melibee hadde herd the grete skiles
 and resoñs of Dame Prudence / and hire wise informacioñs
and techynges / [3061] his herte gan encline to the wil of
 his wif considerynge hir trewe entente / [3062] and con-
 formed hym anon and assented fully to werken after hir
 conseil / [3063] and thonked god / of whom procedeþ al
 vertu and alle goodnesse / þat hym sente a wyf / of so greet
 discrecion [3064] And whan the day cam þat hise Aduer-
 saries sholde appieren in his presence / [3065] he spak vn-

to hem ful goodly / and seyde in this wyse [3066] ¶ Al be
 it so / þat of youre pride / and *presumpciōn and folie* /
 and of youre necligence *and vnkonnyng* / [3067] ye haue
 mysborn yow and trespassed vn-to me . [3068] yet^t for as
 muche / as I see and biholde youre grete humylitee /
 [3069] and þat ye been sory and repentant^t of youre giltes /
 [3070] it constreyneth me / to doon yow grace and mercy
 [3071] ¶ Therefore / I receyue yow / to my grace [3072] and
 foryeue yow outrely alle the offenses / Iniuries and wronges
 þat ye haue doon agayn me and myne / [3073] to this
 effect^t and to this ende / that god of his endeles mercy
 [3074] wole at the tyme of oure diyng^e foryeuen vs oure
 giltes that we han trespassed to hym in this wrecched^t
 world^t / [3075] ffor douteles / if we be sory and repentant^t
 of the synnes and giltes whiche we han trespassed in the
 sighte of oure lord god / [3076] he is so free and so merci-
 able / [3077] that he wole foryeuen vs oure giltes [3078]
 and bryngen vs to his blisse / that neuere hath ende . Amen

¶ Heere is ended Chaucers tale of Melibee / and of
 Dame Prudence 𐀚

¶ The murye wordes of the Hoost/ to the Monk/ 
[on leaf 172]

Whan ended / was my tale / of Melibee 3079
 And of Prudence / and hire benignytee
 Oure hoost seyde / as I am feithful man
 And by that precious corpus Madrian
 I hadde leuere / than a barel ale

That good lief my wyf / hadde herd this tale 3084

She nys no thyng / of swich pacience

As was this Melibeus wyf Prudence

By goddes bones / whan I bete my knaues

She bryngeth me forth / the grete clobbed staues 3088

And crieth / slee the dogges euerichoon

And brek/ hem / bothe bak and euery boon

¶ And if that any neigheboore of myne

Wol nat in chirche / to my wyf enclyne 3092

Or be so hardy / to hire to trespace

Whan she comth [home] / she rampeth in my face

And crieth / false coward / wrek thy wyf/

By corpus bones / I wol haue thy knyf/ 3096

And thou shalt haue my distaf and go spynne

fro day to nyght / right thus she wol bigynne

Allas she seith / that euere þat I was shape

To wedden a Milksope / or a coward ape 3100

That wol been ouerlad with euery wight

Thou darst nat stonden by thy wyues right

¶ This is my lif but if that I wol fighte

And out at dore / anon I moot me dighte 3104

Or elles I am but lost but if that I

Be lik a wilde leon fool-hardy

I woot wel / she wol do me slee som day

Som neigheboore / and thanne go my way 3108

ffor I am perilous / with knyf in honde

Al be it that I dar hire nat withstonde

ffor she is / byg in Armes by my feith
 That shal he fynde / þat hire mysdooth or seith 3112
 But lat vs passe away / fro this mateere
 ¶ My lord the Monk quod he / be myrie of cheere
 ffor ye shul telle a tale trewely
 Loo Rouchestre / stant heer faste by 3116
 Ryde forth myn owene lord / brek nat oure game
 But by my trouthe / I knowe nat youre name
 Wher shal I calle yow / my lord daun Ioñn
 Or daun Thomas / or elles daun Alboñ 3120
 Of what hous be ye / by youre fader kyn
 I vowe to god / thou hast a ful fair skyn
 It is a gentil pasture / ther thow goost' [leaf 172, back]
 Thou art nat lyk' a penant' or a goost' 3124
 Vpon my feith / thou art som Officer
 Som worthy sexteyn / or som Celerer
 ffor by my fader soule / as to my doom
 Thou art a maister / whan thou art at hoom 3128
 No poure cloystrer/ ne no Novys
 But a gouernour / wily and wys
 And therwith-al / of brawnes and of bones
 A wel farynge persone / for the nones 3132
 I pray to god / yeue hym confusioun
 That first thee broghite / vn-to Religioun
 Thou woldest han been / a tredefowel aright'
 Haddestow / as greet a leue / as thou hast myghit' 3136
 To parfourne al thy lust/ in engendrure
 Thou haddest' bigeten / ful many a creature
 Allas / why werestow / so wyd a Cope
 God yeue me sorwe / but and I were a pope 3140
 Nat oonly thou / but euery myghty man
 Though he were shorn / ful hye vpon his pan
 Sholde haue a wyf / for al the world is lorn
 Religioun / hath take vp al the corn 3144
 Of tredyngt. and we borel men been shrympes
 Of fieble trees / ther comen wrecched ympes

[.	
. <i>no gap in the MS.</i>]	3148
This maketh / that oure wyuces wole assaye	
Religious folk' for ye mowe bettre paye	
Of Venus paiementz / than mowe we	
God woot' no lussheburgh' payen ye	3152
But be nat wrooth / my lord for þat I pleye	
fful ofte in game / a sooth I haue herd seye	
¶ This worthy Monk / took al in pacience	
And seyde I wol doon al my diligence	3156
As fer as sowneth / in-to honestee	
To telle yow a tale / or two / or three	
And if yow list' to herkne hyderward'	
I wol [yow] seyn the lyf / of seint Edward'	3160
Or ellis / first' Tragedies wol I telle	
Of whiche /I/ haue an hundred in my Celle	
¶ Tragedie is to seyn / a certeyn storie	
As olde bookes / maken vs memorie	3164
Of hym / that stood / in greet prosperitee	
And is yfallen / out of heigh' degree	
In to myserie / and endeth wrecchedly	
And they ben versified comunely	3168
Of .vj. feet'. which men clepen Exametroñ	
In prose eek / been endited many oon	
And eek in meetre / in many a sondry wyse	
Lo / this declaryng' oghite ynogh' suffice	3172
Now herkneþ / if yow liketh' for to heere	[leaf 173]
But first / I yow biseeke / in this mateere	
Though I by ordre / telle nat' these thynges	
Be it of Popes / Emperours / or kynges	3176
After hir ages / as men writen fynde'	
But tellen hem / som' bifore <i>and</i> som' bihynde	
As it now comth / vn-to my remembraunce	
Haue me excused of min ignoraunce	3180

¶ Explicit'

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Monkes tale / de casibus
virorum Illustrium. [on leaf 173]

Iwol biwaille / in manere of Tragedie *[Painting of the
Monk and two dogs]*
The harm of hem / that stooðe in heigh degree
And fillen so / that ther nas no remedie
To brynge hem / out of hir' aduersitee 3184
ffor certain / whan þat ffortune list to flee

Ther may no man / the cours of hire withholde
Lat no man truste / on blynd prosperitee
Be war of these ensamples / trewe and olde 3188

[Lucifer.]

AT lucifer / though / he an Angel were ¶ Lucifer
And nat a man / at hym wol I bigynne
ffor though ffortune / may noon Angel dere
ffrom heigh degree / yet fel he for his synne 3192
Doun in to helle / where he yet is Inne
O Lucifer / brightest' . of Angels alle
Now artow sathanas / þat mayst nat twynne
Out of miserie / in which þat thou art' falle 3196

[Adam.]

Loo Adam / in the feeld of Damysse ¶ Adam
With goddes owene fynger / wroght was he
And nat bigeten / of mannes sperme vnclene
And welte all Paradys / sauynge o tree 3200
Hadde neuere worldly man so heigh degree
As Adam / til he for mys gouernaunce
Was dryuen / out of hys hye prosperitee
To labour and to helle / and to meschaunce 3204

[*Sampson.*]

Loo Sampson / which that was Annunciat' ¶ Sampson
 By Angel / longe er his Natiuitee
 And was / to god almyghty consecrat'
 And stood in noblesse / whil he myghte see 3208
 Was neuere / swich another as was hee
 To speke of strengthe / and ther-*with* hardynesse
 But to hise wyues / toolde he his secree 3211
 Thurgh which / he slow hym self / for wrecchednesse

Sampson / this noble almyghty Champion [leaf 173, back]
 With-uten wepene / saue his handes tweyne
 He slow / and al torente the leon
 Toward' his weddyng' walkyng by the weye 3216
 His false wyf / koude hym so plesse and preye
 Til she his conseil knew / and she vntrewe
 Vn-to hise foos / his conseil gan biwreye
 And hym forsookt. and took another newe 3220

Thre hundred foxes / took Sampson for Ire
 And alle hir tayles / he togydre bond'
 And sette the foxes tayles / alle on fire
 ffor he / on euery tayl / had kny't a brond' 3224
 And they brende / alle the cornes in that lond'
 And alle hire Olyueres / and vynes eke
 A thousand men / he slow eek *with* his hond'
 And hadde no wepene / but an Asses cheke 3228

Whan they were slayn / so thursted hym / that he
 Was wel ny lorn / for which he gan to preye
 That god wolde / on his peyne han som pitee
 And sende hym drynke / or elles moste he deye 3232
 And of this asses cheke / that was dreye
 Out of a wang' tooth / sprang anon a welle
 Of which he drank anon / shortly to seye
 Thus heelp'e hym god / as Iudicum can telle 3236

By verrey force / at Gazan / on a nyght
 Maugree Philistiens of that Citee
 The gates of the toun / he hath vp plyght
 And on his bak. ycaried hem hath hee 3240
 Hye on an hill / þat men myghte hem see
 O noble almyghty Sampsoñ / lief and deere
 Had thou nat toold / to wommen thy secrete
 In all this world / ne hadde been thy peere 3244

This Sampson / neuere Ciser drank ne wyn
 Ne on his heed / cam rasour noon ne sheere
 By precept of the Messenger diuyn
 ffor alle hise strengthes / in hise heeres weere 3248
 And fully twenty wynter yeer by yeere
 He / hadde of Israel the gouernañce
 But soone / shal he wepe many a teere
 ffor wommen / shal hym bryngen to meschance 3252

Vn-to his lemman Dalida he tolde
 That in hise heeris / al his strengthe lay
 And falsly to hise foomen / she hym solde
 ¶ And slepyng in hir barm / vp-on a day [leaf 174] 3256
 She made to clippe / or shere / hise heres away
 And made hise foomen / al this craft espyen
 And whan þat they / hym foond in this array
 They bounde hym faste / and putten out hise eyen 3260

But er his heer / were clipped or yshaue
 Ther was no boond / with which men myghte him bynde
 But now is he / in prison in a Caue
 Where as they made hym / at the Queerne grynde 3264
 O noble Sampsoñ / strongest of mankynde
 O whilom / Iuge in glorie and in richesse
 Now maystow wepen / with thyne eyen blynde
 Sith thou fro wele / art falle in wrecchednesse 3268

The ende of this caytyf^t was as I shal seye
 Hise foomen / made a feeste vp-on a day
 And made hym as a fool / biforn hem pleye
 And this was / in a temple of greet array 3272
 But atte laste / he made a foul affray
 ffor he / the pilers shook / and made hem falle
 And doun fil Temple and al / and ther it lay
 And slow hym self / and eek his foomen alle 3276

This is to seyn the Prynces euerichoon
 And eek / thre thousand^ē bodyes were ther slayn
 With fallynge / of the grete Temple of stoon
 Of Sampson / now wol I na moore sayn 3280
 Beth war / by this ensample oold and playn
 That no men / telle hir conseil til hir wyues
 Of swich thyng^t as they wolde han secree fayn
 If þat it touche / hir lymes or hir lyues 3284

[Hercules.]

Off Hercules / the souereyn Conquerour ¶ Hercules
 Syngen hise werkes / laude and heigh^t renoun
 ffor in his tyme / of strengthe he was the flour
 He slow / and rafte the skyn of the leoun 3288
 He of Centauros / leyde the boost adoun
 He Arpies slow / the crueel bryddes felle
 He golden Apples / refte of the dragoun
 He drow out Cerberus / the hound of helle 3292

He slow the crueel tyrant Busirus
 And made his hors / to frete hym fless^h and boon
 He slow / the firy serpent venymus
 Of Acheloys hornes two / he brak^t oon 3296
 And he slow Caecus / in a Caue of stoon
 He slow the geant^t Antheus the stronge
 He slow the grisly boor / and that anon [leaf 174, back]
 And bar the heuene / on his nekke longe 3300

Was neuere wigh^t sith that this world bigan
 That slow so manye Monstres / as dide he
 Thurg^h-out this wyde world / his name ran
 What for his strengthe / and for his heigh^t bountee 3304
 And euery Reawme / wente he for to see
 He was so stroong^t þat no man mygh^te hym lette
 At bothe the worldes endes / seith Trophee ¶ Ille vates Chalde-
 orum Tropheus
 In stide of boundes / he a pileer sette 3308

A lemman hadde / this noble Champioⁿ
 That high^te Dianira / fress^h as May
 And as thise clerkes / maken mentioⁿ
 She hath hym sent. a sherte fress^h and gay 3312
 Allas this sherte / allas and weylaway
 Euenymed was / so subtilly with-alle
 That er þat he / had wered it half a day
 It made his fless^h / al from hise bones falle 3316

But nathelees / somme clerkes hire excusen
 By oon þat high^te Nessus that it maked
 Be as be may / I wol hire nog^ht accusen
 But on his bak^t this sherte he wered al naked 3320
 Til þat his fless^h / was for the venym blaked
 And whan he saugh^h / noon oother remedye
 In hoo^te coles / he hath hym seluen raked
 ffor with no venym deigned hym to dye 3324

Thus starf / this worthy / myghty Hercules
 Lo / who may truste / on ffortune any throwe
 ffor hym þat folweth / al this world of prees
 Er he be war / is ofte yleyd ful lowe 3328
 fful wys is he / that kan hym seluen knowe
 Beth war[?] / for whan that ffortune list to glose
 Thanne wayteth she / her man to ouerthrowe
 By swich a wey / as he wolde leest suppose 3332

[Nebuchadnezzar.]
The myghty trone / the precious tresor ¶ Nabugo-
 The glorious ceptre / and Roial magestee donosor
 That hadde the kyng^t Nabugodonosor
 With tonge / vnnethe may discryued bee 3336
 He twyves / wan Ierusalem the Citee
 The vessel of the temple / he *with* hym ladde
 At Babiloignæ / was his souereyn see
 In which his glorie / and his delit he hadde 3340

 The faireste children / of the blood Roial [leaf 175]
 Of Israel / he leet do gelde anoon
 And maked ech of hem / to been his thral
 Amonges othere / Daniel was oon 3344
 That was the wiseste child of euerychon
 ffor he / the dremes of the kyng expowned
 Where as in Chaldeye / clerk ne was ther noon
 That wiste / to what fyn / hise dremes sowned 3348

 This proude kyng^t leet maken a statue of gold^t
 Sixty cubites long^t and seuene in brede
 The which ymage / he bothe yonge and oold^t
 Comanded to loute / and haue in drede 3352
 Or in a ffourneys / ful of flambes rede
 He shal be brent^t that wolde noght obeye
 But neuere wolde assente / to that dede
 Daniel / ne hise yonge felawes tweye 3356

 This kyng of kynges / proud was and elaat^t
 He wende / þat god that sit in magestee
 Ne myghte / hym nat bireue of his estaat
 But sodeynly / he loste his dignytee 3360
 And lyk a beast / hym semed for to bee
 And eet hey as an Oxe / and lay ther oute
 In reyn / with wilde beestes walked hee
 Til certain tyme / was ycome aboute 3364

And lik/ an Egles fetheres / wax his heres
 Hise nayles / lyk a briddes clawes weere
 Til god relessed hym / a certeyn yeres
 And yaf hym wit / and thanne *with* many a teere 3368
 He thanked god / and euere his lyf in feere
 Was he / to doon amys / or moore trespace
 And til that tyme / he leyd was on his beere
 He knew / that god was / ful of myght *and* grace 3372

[*Belshazzar.*]

His sone / which that highte Balthasar ¶ Balthasar
 That heeld the regne / after his fader day
 He by his fader / koude noght be war
 ffor proud he was / of herte and of array 3376
 And eek / an ydolastre / he was ay
 His hye estaat^t assured hym in pryde
 But ffortune / caste hym down / and ther he lay
 And sodeynly / his regne gan diuide 3380

A feeste he made / vn-to hise lordes alle
 Vp-on a tyme / and bad hem blithe bee
 And thanne / hise Officers gan he calle
 Goothⁿ bryngethⁿ forth / the vessels quod he [leaf 175, back]
 Whiche that my fader / in his *prosperitee* 3385
 Out of the temple / of Ierusalem birafte
 And to oure hye goddes / thanke we
 Of honour / that oure eldres *with* us lafte 3388

Hys wyf^t hise lordes / and hise concubynes
 Ay dronken / whil hire Appetites laste
 Out of this noble vessels / sondry wynes
 And on a wal / this kyng^t hise eyen caste 3392
 And saughⁿ an hand Armlees / þat wroot ful fast
 ffor feere of which / he quook^t and siked soore
 This hand^t / that Balthasar so soore agaste
 Wroot^t Mane techel phares / and na moore 3396

In al that land / Magicien was noon
 That koude expoude / what this lettre mente
 But Daniel / expowned it anon
 And seyde kyng' god to thy fader sente 3400
 Glorie and honour / regne / tresour / rente
 And he was proud' / and no-thing' god ne dradde
 And therfore / god greet wreche vp-on hym sente
 And hym birafte / the regne þat he hadde 3404

He was out cast' of mannes compaignye
 With asses / was his habitacioun
 And eet hey as a beest' in weet and drye
 Til that he knew / by grace and by resoun 3408
 That god of heuene / hath domynacioun
 Ouer euery regne / and euery creature
 And thanne / hadde god of hym compassioun
 And hym restored / his regne and his figure 3412

Eek / thou that art' his sone / art proud also
 And knowest' alle these thynges verrailly
 And art rebel to god / and art his foo
 Thou drank eek / of hise vessels boldely 3416
 Thy wyf eek' and thy wenches synfully
 Dronke of the same vessels / sondry wynys
 And heryest' false goddes cursedly
 Therefore to thee / yshapen ful greet pyne ys 3420

This hand was sent from god / that on the wal
 Wroot' Mane techel phares / truste me
 Thy regne is doon / thou weyest' noght' at al
 Dyuyded is thy regne / and it shal be 3424
 To Medes and to Perses [yeue] quod he
 And thilke same nyght' this kyng' was slawe
 And Darius / occupieth his degree [leaf 170]
 Thogh he therto / hadde neither right ne lawe 3428

Lordynges / ensample / heer-by may ye take
 How that in lordshipe / is no sikernesse
 ffor whan ffortune wole a man forsake
 She bereth away / his regne and his richesse 3432
 And eek hise freendes / bothe moore and lesse
 ffor what man / þat hath freendes / thurgh ffortune
 Mishape / wol maken hem enemys as I gesse
 This prouerbe / is ful sooth and ful commune 3436

[Zenobia.]

CEnobia / of Palmyerie Queene ¶ Cenobia
 As writen Persiens / of hir noblesse
 So worthy was in Armes / and so keene
 That no wight passed hire in hardynesse 3440
 Ne in lynage / nor in oother gentillesse
 Of kynges blood of Perce / is she descended
 I seye nat that she hadde moost fairnesse
 But of hire shape / she myghte nat been amended 3444

ffrom hire childhede / I fynde that she fledde
 Office of wommen / and to wode she went
 And many a wilde hertes blood she shedde
 With arwes brode / that she to hem sente 3448
 She was so swift / þat she anon hem hente
 And whan þat she was elder / she wolde kille
 Leoñs / leopardes / and Beres al to-rente
 And in hir Armes / weelde hem at hir wille 3452

She dorste / wilde beestes dennes seke
 And rennen in the montaignes al the nyght
 And slepen vnder the bussch / and she koude eke
 Wrastlen / by verray force / and verray myght / 3456
 With any yong man / were he neuer so wight
 Ther myghte no thyng in hir Armes stonde
 She kepte hir maydenhod / from euery wight
 To no man / deigned hire for to be bonde 3460

But atte laste / hir freendes han hire maried^t
 To Onedake / a Prynce of that contree
 Al were it so / that she hem longe tariet^t
 And ye shul vnderstonde / how that he^s 3464
 Hadde swiche fantasies / as hadde she
 But nathelees / whan they were kny^{simul}t infeere
 They lyued / in ioye / and in felicitee
 ffor ech of hem / hadde oother lief and deere 3468

Saue o thyng^t that she wolde neuere assente [leaf 176, back]
 By no wey / that he sholde by hire lye
 But ones / for it was hir pleyⁿ entente
 To haue a child^t / the world to multiplie 3472
 And also soone / as þat she mygh^te espye
 That she was nat with childe / with that dede
 Thanne wolde she suffre hym / doon his fantasye
 Eft soone / and nat but^t ones out of drede 3476

And if she were with childe / at thilke cast^t
 Na moore / sholde he pleyen thilke game
 Til fully / fourty dayes / weren past^t
 Thanne wolde she ones / suffre hym do the same 3480
 Al were this Onedake / wilde or tame
 He gat na moore of hire^t for thus she seyde
 It was to wyues / lecherie and shame
 In oother caas / if þat men with hem pleyde 3484

Two sones / by Onedake hadde she
 The whiche she kepte / in vertu and lettrure
 But now / vn-to oure tale / turne we
 I seye / so worshipful a creature 3488
 And wys ther-with / and large with mesure
 So penyble in the werre / and curteis eke
 Ne moore labour / mygh^te in werre endure
 Was noon / though al this world men wolde seke 3492

Hir riche array / ne myghte nat be told
 As wel in vessel / as in hire clothyng'
 She was al clad / in perree and in gold
 And eek / she lafte noght / for noon huntyng' 3496
 To haue of sondry tonges / ful knowyng'
 Whan þat she leyser hadde / and for to entende
 To lerne bookes / was al hire likyng'
 How she in vertu / myghte hir lyf dispende 3500

And shortly / of this proces for to trete
 So doghty was hir housbonde and eek she
 That they conquered / manye regnes grete
 In the Orient with many a faire Citee 3504
 Apertenant' vn-to the magestee
 Of Rome / and with strong hond held hem ful faste
 Ne neuere myghte / hir foo men doon hem flee
 Ay / whil that Onedakes dayes laste 3508

Hir batailles / who so list hem for to rede
 Agayn Sapor the kyng' and othere mo
 And how al this proces / fil in dede
 Why she conquered / and what tittle therto [leaf 177] 3512
 And after / of hir meschief' and hire wo
 How þat she was / biseged and ytake
 Lat' hym / vn-to my maister Petrak go
 That writ ynough of this .I vndertake 3516

Whan Onedake was deed / she myghtily
 The regnes heeld / and with hire propre hond'
 Agayn hir foos / she faught so cruelly
 That ther nas kyng' ne prynce in al that lond' 3520
 That he nas glad / if he that grace fond'
 That she ne wolde / vp-on his lond werreye
 With hire / they made alliance by bond'
 To been in pees / and lete hire ride and pleye 3524

- The Emperour of Rome Claudius
 Ne hym bifore / the Romayn Galien
 Ne dorste neuere / been so corageus
 Ne noon Ermyrn / ne noon Egipcien 3528
 Ne Surrien / ne noon Arabyen
 With-Inne the feeldes / that dorste *with* hire fighte
 Lest that she wolde / hem *with* hir handes slen
 Or with hir meignee / putten hem to flighte 3532
- In kynges habit / wente hir sones two'
 As heires / of hir fadres regnes alle
 And hermanno / and Thymalao
 Hir names were / as *Persiens* hem calle 3536
 But ay ffortune / hath in hire hony galle
 This myghty queene / may no while endure
 ffortune / out of hir regne made hire falle
 To wrecchednesse / and to mysauenture 3540
- Aurelian / whan that the gouernaunce
 Of Rome / cam in-to hise handes tweye
 He shoope / vp-on this queene to doon vengeaunce
 And with hise legions / he took his weye 3544
 Toward Cenobie / and shortly for to seye
 He made hire flee / and atte last hire hente
 And fettred hire / and eek hire children tweye
 And wan the land / and hoom to Rome he wente 3548
- Amonges othere thynges / that he wan
 Hir Chaar/ *pat* was *with* gold wroght and perree
 This grete Romayn / this Aurelian
 Hath *with* hym lad / for that men sholde it see 3552
 Biforn his triumphe / walketh shee
 With gilte cheynes / on hire nekke hangynge
 Coroned was she / after hir degree [leaf 177, back]
 And ful of perree / charged hire clothyng 3556

Allas fortune / she that whilom was
 Dredeful / to kynges and to Emperoures
 Now gaureth al the peple / on hire allas
 And she / that helmed was in starke shoures 3560
 And wan by force / townes stronge *and* toures
 Shal on hir heed / now were a vitremyte
 And she that bar/ the ceptre ful of floures
 Shal bere a distaf / hire costes for to quyte 3564

[The modern instances which should come here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

[*Nero.*]

Al though / that Nero were vicius ¶ Nero
 As any feend that lith in helle adoun 3654
 Yet he / as telleth vs Swetonius
 This wyde world / hadde in subieccioun 3656
 Bothe Est^t *and* West^t North / and Septemtrioun
 Of Rubies / sapphires / and of peerles white
 Were alle hise clothes / brouded vp and doun
 ffor he in gemmes / greetly gan delite 3660

Moore delicaat^t moore pompous of array
 Moore proud / was neuere Emperour than he
 That ilke clooth / þat he hadde wered o day
 After that tyme / he nolde it neuere see 3664
 Nettes of gold threed / hadde he greet plentee
 To fissue in Tybre / whan hym liste pleye
 Hise lustes were al lawe / in his decree
 ffor ffortune / as his freend^t / hym wolde obeye 3668

He Rome brende / for his delicacie
 The Senatours / he slow vp-on a day
 To heere / how men wolde wepe and crie
 And slow his brother / and by his suster lay 3672
 His mooder made he / in pitous array
 ffor he / hire wombe slitte / to biholde
 Where he conceyued was so weilaway
 That he so litel / of his mooder tolde 3676

No teere out of hise eyen / for that sighte
 Ne cam / but seyde / a fair womman was she
 Greet wonder is / how þat he koude / or myghte
 Be domesman / of hire dede beautee 3680
 The wyn to bryngen hym comanded he
 And drank / anon / noon oother wo he made
 Whan myght is ioyned vn-to crueltee
 Allas to depe / wol the venym wade 3684

In yowthe / a maister hadde this Emperour [leaf 178]
 To teche hym lettrure / and curteisye
 ffor of moralitee / he was the flour
 As in his tyme / but if bookes lye 3688
 And whil this maister / hadde of hym maistrye
 He makend hym / so konnyng' and so sowple
 That longe tyme it was / er tirannye
 Or any vice / dorste on hym vncowple 3692

This Seneca / of which that I deuyse
 By cause Nero / hadde of hym swich drede
 ffor he fro vices / wolde hym chastise
 Discreetly / as by word / and nat by dede 3696
 Sire wolde he seyn / an Emperour moot nede
 Be vertuous / and hate tirannye
 ffor which / he in a bath / made hym to blede
 On bothe hise Armes / til he moste dye 3700

This Nero / hadde eek / of acustumaunce
 In youthe / agayns his maister for to ryse
 Which afterward / hym thoughte greet greuaunce
 Therefore / he made hym dyen in this wise 3704
 But nathelees / this Seneca the wise
 Chees in a Bath to dye / in this manere
 Rather than han / any oother tormentise
 And thus hath Nero / slayn his maister deere 3708

Now fil it so / that ffortune liste no lenger
 The hye pryde of Nero to cherice
 ffor though þat he was strong' yet was she strenger
 She thoughte thus / by god I am to nyce 3712
 To sette a man / that is fulfild of vice
 In heigh degree / and Emperour hym calle
 By god / out of his sete / I wol hym trice
 Whan he leest' weneth / sonnest shal he falle 3716

The peple roos vp-on hym on a nyght
 ffor his defaute / and whan he it espied
 Out of hise dores / anon he hath hym dight'
 Allone / and ther he wende han ben allied 3720
 He knocked faste / and ay the moore he cried
 The fastere shette they / the dores alle
 ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he dyed
 And wente his wey / no lenger dorste he calle 3724

The peple cride / and rombled vp and doun
 That with his erys / herde he / how they seyde
 Where is this false tiraunt' this Neroun
 ffor fere / almost' out of his wit he breyde [leaf 178, back]
 And to hise goddes / pitously he preyd
 ffor socour / but it myghte nat bityde
 ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he deyde
 And ran in-to a gardyn hym to hyde 3732

And in this gardyn / foond he cherles tweye
 That seten by a fyr / greet and reek'
 And to thise cherles two / he gan to preye
 To sleen hym / and to girden of his heek' 3736
 That to his body / whan þat he were deek'
 Were no despit ydoon / for his defame
 Hym self he slow / he koude no better reek'
 Of which / ffortune lough / and hadde a game 3740

[*Holofernes.*]

Was neuere Capitayn / vnder a kyng/ ¶ De Oloferno
 That regnes mo / putte in subieccioun
 Ne strengre was in feeld / of alle thyngt
 As in his tyme / ne gretter of renoun 3744
 Ne moore pompous / in heigh *presumpcioun*
 Than Oloferne / which ffortune ay kiste
 So likerously / and ladde hym vp and doun
 Til þat his heed was of / er þat he wiste 3748

Nat oonly / that this world / hadde hym in Awe
 ffor lesynge / of richesse / or libertee
 But made euery man / reneyen his lawe
 Nabugodonosor / was god seyde hee 3752
 Noon oother god / [ne] sholde adoured bee
 Agayns his heeste / no wight dorste trespac
 saue in Bethulia / a strong Citee
 Where Eliachim / a preest was of that place
¶ Et fecerunt filij
 Israel secundum
 quod constituerat
 eis sacerdos domi-
 ni Eliachim. [t. i. Joacim, *Judith* iv. 8.]

But taak kepe of the deeth of Oloferne
 Amydde his hoost he dronke lay a nyght
 With-Inne his tente / large as is a berne
 And yet for al his pompe / and al his myght 3760
 Iudith a womman / as he lay vpright
 Slepynge / his heed of smoot and from his tente
 fful pryuely / she stal from euery wight
 And with his heed / vn-to hir toun she wente 3764

[*Antiochus.*]

What nedeth it of kyng Anthiochus ¶ De Regē An-
 To telle / his hye Roial magestee thiocho illustri-
 His hye pride / hise werkes venymus
 ffor swich another / was ther noon as he 3768
 Rede which þat he was / in Machabee
 And rede / the proude wordes that he seyde
 And why he fil / fro heigh prosperitee
 And in an hiht / how wrecchedly he deyde [leaf 179] 3772

ffortune / hym hadde enhaunced so in pride
 That *verraily* / he wende he mygh̄te attayne
 Vn-to the sterres / vp-on euery syde
 And in balance / weyen ech montayne 3776
 And alle the floodes / of the see restrayne
 And goddes peple / hadde he moost' in hate
 Hem wolde he sleen / in torment' and in payne
 Wenynge / þat god ne mygh̄te his pride abate 3780

And for that Nichanore / and Thymothee
 Of Iewes / weren venquysshed myghtily
 Vn-to the Iewes / swich an hate hadde he
 That he bad / greithen his Chaar ful hastily 3784
 And swoor / and seyde ful despitously
 Vn-to Ierusalem / he wolde eft soone
 To wreken his Ire / on it ful cruelly
 But of his purpos / he was let ful soone 3788

God for his manace / hym so soore smoot'
 With invisible wounde / ay incurable
 That in hise guttes / carf it so and boot'
 That hise peynes / weren importable 3792
 And certainly / the wreche was resonable
 ffor many a mannes guttes / dide he peyne
 But from his purpos / cursed and dampnable
 ffor all his smert' he wolde hym nat restreyne 3796

But bad anon / apparaillen his hoost
 And soodeynly / er he was of it war
 God daunted / al his pride and all his boost'
 ffor he so soore / fil out of his Char 3800
 That it hise lemes / and his skyn to-tar
 So that' he neyther / mygh̄te go ne ryde
 But in a chayer / men / aboute hym bar
 Al forbrused / bothe bak and syde 3804

The wreche of god / hym smoot so cruelly
 That thurgh his body / wikked wormes crepte
 And ther-with-al / he stank' horribly
 That noon of al his meynee / þat hym kepte 3808
 Wheither so he wook' or ellis slepte
 Ne mygh̄te nogh̄t' for stynk' of hym endure
 In this meschief / he wayled and eek wepte
 And knew god / lord of euey creature 3812

To all his hoost' and to hym self also [leaf 179, back]
 fful wlatson was / the stynk' of his careyne
 No man / ne mygh̄te hym bere / to ne fro
 And in this stynk' and this horrible peyne 3816
 He starf ful wrecchedly / in a Monteyne
 Thus hath this Robbour / and this homycide
 That many a man / made to wepe and pleyne
 Swich gerdoñ / as bilongeth vn-to pryde 3820

[*Alexander the Great.*]

The storie of Alisaundre / is so commune ¶ De Alex-
 That euey wigh̄t' that hath discrecioun andro
 Hath herd somewhat' or al / of his ffortune
 This wyde world / as in conclusioun 3824
 He wan by strengthe / or for his hye renoun
 They weren glad / for pees vn-to hym sende
 The pride / of man and beest / he leyde adoun
 Wher so he cam / vn-to the wordes ende 3828

Comparisoñ / mygh̄te neuere yet been maked
 Bitwixen hym / and another Conquerour
 ffor al this world / for drede of hym hath quaked
 He [was] of knygh̄thod' and of fredom flour 3832
 ffortune hym made / the heir of hire honour
 Saue wyn and wommen / no man mighte aswage
 His hye entente in Armes and labour
 So was he ful / of leonyn corage 3836

What pris were it to hym / though I yow tolde
 Of Darius / and an hundred thousand mo
 Of kynges / princes / Erles / dukes / bolde
 Whiche he conquered / and broghte hem in-to wo 3840
 I seye / as fer as man may ryde or go
 The world was his / what sholde I moore deuysse
 ffor though I write / or tolde yow eueremo
 Of his knyghthode / it myghite nat suffise 3844

Twelf yeer he regned / as seith Machabee
 Philippes sone of Macidoyne he was
 That first was kyng' in Grece the contree
 O worthy gentil Alisandre allas 3848
 That euere sholde fallen swich a cas
 Empoysoned / of thyn owene folk thou weere
 Thy sys / ffortune / hath turned in-to Aas
 And [yet] for thee / ne weepe she neuer a teere 3852

Who shal me yeuen teeris to compleyne
 The deeth of gentillesse / and of ffranchise
 That' al the world / weilded in his demeyne
 And yet hym thoughte / it myghite nat suffise [leaf 150] 3856
 So ful was his corage / of heigh emprise
 Allas / who shal me helpe to endite
 ffalse ffortune / and poyson to despise
 The whiche two / of al this wo I wytte 3860

[*Julius Cesar.*]

By wisdom / manhede / and by labour ¶ De Iulio
 ffrom humble bed / to roial magestee Cesare
 Vp roos he Iulius the Conquerour
 That wan al thoccident' by land' and See 3864
 By strengthe of hand / or elles by tretce
 And vn-to Rome / made hem tributarie
 And sitthe of Rome / the Emperour was he
 Til that ffortune / weex his Aduersarie 3868

O myghty Cesar / that in Thessalie
 Agayn Pompeus / fader thyn in lawe
 That of the Orient hadde all the Chiualrie
 As fer/ as þat the day bigynneth dawe 3872
 Thou thurgh thy knyghthod / hast hem take and slawe
 Saue fewe folk / that *with* Pompeus fledde
 Thurgh which thou puttest al thorient in Awe
 Thanke ffortune / that so wel thee spedde 3876

¶ But now a litel while / I wol biwaille ¶ Nota de Pompeyo
 This Pompeus / this noble *gouernour*
 Of Rome / which that fleigh at this bataille
 I seye / oon of hise men / a fals traitour 3880
 His heed of smoot to wynnyn hym fauour
 Of Iulius / and hym the heed he broghite
 Allas Pompeye / of Thorient Conquerour
 That ffortune / vn-to swich a fyn thee broghite 3884

¶ To Rome agayn / repaireth Iulius
 With his triumphe / lauriat ful hye
 But on a tyme / Brutus Cassius
 That euere hadde / of his hye estaat envye 3888
 fful priuely / hath maad conspiracye
 Agayns this Iulius / in subtil wise
 And caste the place / in which he sholde dye
 With Boydekyns / as I shal yow deuyse 3892

This Iulius / to the Capitolie wente
 Vpon a day / as he was wont to goon
 And in the Capitolie / anon hym hente
 This false Brutus / and hise othere foon 3896
 And stiked hym / with boydekyns anoon
 With many a wounde / and thus they lete hym lye
 But neuere gronte he / at no strook but oon [leaf 180, back]
 Or elles at two / but if his storie lye 3900

So manly / was this Iulius of herte
 And so wel louede / estaatly honestee
 That though hise deedly woundes soore smerte
 His Mantel / ouer hise hypes caste he 3904
 ffor no man / sholde seen his priuete
 And as he lay / of diyng' in a traunce
 And wiste verriaily / that deed was hee
 Of honestee / yet hadde he remembraunce 3908

Lucan / to thee / this storie I recomende
 And to Swetoñ / and to Valerius also
 That of this storie / writen word and ende
 How þat / to thise grete Conquerours two 3912
 ffortune was first freend / and sitthe foo
 No man ne truste / vp-on hire fauour longe
 But haue hire / in awayt' for euere moo
 Witnesse / on alle thise Conquerours stronge 3916

[*Cresus.*]

This riche Cresus / whilom kyng' of Lyde ¶ Cresus
 Of which Cresus / Cirus soore hym dradde
 Yet was he caught/ amyddes al his pryde
 And to be brent/ men to the fyr hym ladde 3920
 But swich a reyn / doun fro the welkne shadde
 That slow the fyr / and made hym to escape
 But to be war / no grace yet he hadde
 Til ffortune / on the galwes / made hym gape 3924

Whanne he escaped was / he kan nat stente
 ffor to bigynne / a newe werre agayn
 He wende wel / for þat ffortune hym sente
 Swich hape / that he escaped thurgh the rayn 3928
 That of hise foos / he myghte nat be slayn
 And eek a sweuene / vp-on a nyght' he mette
 Of which / he was so proud' / and eek so fayn
 That in vengeance / he al his herte sette 3932

Vp-on a tree / he was / as that hym thoughte
 Ther Iuppiter hym wesshe / bothe bak' and syde
 And Phebus eek' a fair towaille hym broughte
 To dryen hym with / and therefore wax his pryde 3936
 And to his doghter / that stood hym bisyde
 Which þat he knew / in heigh science habounde
 He bad hire telle hym / what it signyfyde
 And she his drem / bigan right thus expounde 3940

The tree quod she / the galwes is to meene [leaf 181]
 And Iuppiter / bitokneth snow and reyn
 And Phebus / with his towaille so clene
 Tho been / the sonne bemes for to seyn 3944
 Thou shalt ananged be / fader certeyn
 Reyn shal thee wasshe / and sonne shal thee drye
 Thus warned hym / ful plat' and ful pleyne
 His doghter / which that called was Phanye 3948

An-hanged was Cresus / the proude kyng'
 His roial Trone / myghte hym nat auaille
 Tragedies / noon oother maner thyng /
 Ne kan in syngyng' crie ne biwaille 3952
 But that ffortune / alwey wole assaille
 With vnwar strook' / the Regnes þat been proude
 ffor whan men trusteth hire / thanne wol she faille
 And couere hire brighte face / with a clowde 3956

[These 4 modern instances should follow Zenobia, p. 268.]

[Peter the Cruel, of Spain.]

Onoble / o. worthy Petro / glorie of Spayne ¶ De Petro
 Whom ffortune heeld / so hye in magestee Rege Is-
 pannie
 Wel oghten men / thy pitous deeth complayne
 Out of thy land / thy brother made thee flee 3568
 And after / at a seege by subtiltee
 Thou were bitraysed / and lad vn-to his tente
 Where as he / with his owene hand slow thee
 Succedyngo / in thy regne and in thy rente 3572

The feeld of snow / with theghe of blak ther-Inne [Bertrand du Guesclin.]
 Caught with the lymeroð / coloured as the gleede
 He brew this cursednesse / and al this synne
 The wikked nest^t was werker^t of this nede 3576
 Noght Charles Olyuver / that took ay heede
 Of trouthe and honour / but of Armorike [Olivier de Mauny of Brittany.]
 Genylon Olyuer / corrupt^t for meede
 Broghte this worthy kyng^t in swich a brike 3580

O [Peter of Cyprus.]
 worthy Petro / kyng of Cypre also ¶ De Petro
 That Alisandre wan / by heigh maistrie Rege de
 Cipro
 fful many an hethen / wroghfestow ful wo
 Of which / thyne owene liges hadde envie 3584
 And for no thyng^t but for thy Chiualrie
 They in thy bed / han slayn thee by the morwe
 Thus kan ffortune / hir wheel gouerne and gye
 And out of Ioye / brynge men to sorwe 3588

[Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.]

O ff Melan / grete Barnabo Viscounte ¶ De Barnabo
 God of delit^t. and scourge of Lumbardye de Lumbardia
 Why sholde I nat^t thyn Infortune acounte
 Sith in estaat^t / thow cloumbe were so hye [leaf 181, back]
 Thy brother sone / that was thy double allye
 ffor he thy Nevew was / and sone in lawe
 With-Inne his prison / made thee to dye
 But why ne how / noot I þat thou were slawe 3596

[Ugolino, Count of Pisa.]

O ff the Erl Hugelyn of Pyze / the langour ¶ De Hugelino
 Ther may no tonge / telle for pitee Comite
 de Pize
 But^t litel out of Pize / stant a tour
 In which tour / in prison put was he 3600
 And with hym / been hise litel children thre
 The eldeste / scarsly / fyf yeer was of Age
 Allas ffortune / it was greet crueltee
 Swiche briddes / for to putte / in swiche a Cage 3604

Dampned was he / to dyen in that prisoñ
 ffor Roger / which þat Bisshope was of Pize
 Hadde on hym maad / a fals suggestioñ
 Thurgh which / the peple / gan vpon hym rise 3608
 And putten hym to prisoñ / in swich wise
 As ye han herd / and mete / and drynke he hadde
 So smal / that vnnethe it may suffise
 And therwith-al / it was ful poure and badde 3612

And on a day / bifil / þat in that hour
 Whan þat his mete / wont was to be broght
 The Gayler shette the dores of the tour
 He herde it wel / but he spak right noght 3616
 And in his herte / anon ther fil a thoght/
 That they for hunger / wolde doon hym dyen
 Allas quod he / allas that I was wroght
 Ther-with / the teeris fillen from hise eyen 3620

His yonge sone / that thre yeer was of age
 Vn-to hym seyde / fader / fader // why do ye wepe
 Whanne wol the Gayler / bryngen oure potage
 Is ther no morsel breed / that ye do kepe 3624
 I am so hungry / that I may nat slepe
 Now wolde god / that I myghte slepen euere
 Thanne sholde nat hunger / in my wombe crepe
 Ther is no thyng but breed / that me were leuere 3628

Thus day by day / this child bigan to crye
 Til in his fadres barm / adoun it lay
 And seyde / fare wel fader / I moot dye
 And kiste his fader / and dyde the same day 3632
 And whan the woful fader / deed it say
 ffor wo / hise Armes two / he gan to byte
 And seyde / Allas ffortune and weylaway [leaf 182]
 Thy false wheel / my wo al may I wytte 3636

Hise children wende / that it for hunger was
 That he hise Armes gnou / and nat for wo
 And seyde fader / do nat so Allas
 But rather ete the flessĥ vp-on vs two 3640
 Oure flessĥ thou yaf /. take oure flessĥ vs fro
 And ete ynogh / right thus they to hym seyde
 And after that with-Inne a day or two
 They leyde hem / in his lappe adoun and deyde 3644

Hym-self despeired / eek for hunger starf
 Thus ended is / this myghty Erl of Pize
 ffrom heigh estaat ffortune away hym carf
 Of this Tragedie / it' oghte ynough suffise 3648
 Who so wol here it' in a lenger wise
 Redeth / the grete Poete of ytaille
 That highte Dant'. for he kan al deuysen
 ffro point to point'. nat o word wol he faille 3652

¶ *Explicit Tragedia*

¶ Heere stynteth the Knyght the Monk' of his tale. 卐

¶ The prologue of the Nonnes preestes tale ^[on leaf 182] 

Hoo quod the knyght / good sire namoore this
 That ye han seyde / is right ynough ywis
 And muchel moore / for litel heynesse
 Is right ynough / to mucche folk I gesse 3960
 I seye for me / it is a greet disese
 Where as men han been / in greet welthe and ese
 To heeren / of hire sodeyn fal allas
 And the contrarie / is ioye and greet solas 3964
 As whan a man / hath ben in poure estaat
 And clymbeth vp / and wexeth fortunat
 And there abideth / in prosperitee
 Swich thyngt is gladsom / as it thynketh me 3968
 And of swich thyngt. were goodly for to telle
Ye quod oure hoost by saint Poules belle
 ye seye right sooth this Monk / he clappeth lowde
 He spak. how ffortune / couered with a clowde 3972
 ¶ I noot neuere what / and also of a Tragedie ^[leaf 182, back]
 Right now ye herde / and pardee no remedie
 It is / for to biwaille / ne compleyne
 That þat is doon / and als it is a peyne 3976
 As ye han seyde / to heere of heynesse
 ¶ Sire monk. namoore of this / so god yow blesse
 Youre tale / anoyeth all this compaignye
 Swich talkyngt is nat worth a boterflye 3980
 ffor ther-Inne is ther / no desport ne game
 ¶ Wherefore sire Monk daun Piers by youre name
 I pray yow hertely / telle vs somewhat elles
 ffor sikerly nere clynkyngt of youre belles 3984

That on youre bridel hange / on euery syde
 By heuene kyngt. that for vs alle dyde
 I sholde er this / han fallen doun for sleepe
 Al-thogh̄ the slough̄ / had neuer been so deepe 3988
 Thanne hadde your tale / al be toold̄ in veyn
 ffor certainly / as that these clerkes seyn
 Where as a man / may haue noon Audience
 Noghit helpeth it to tellen his sentence 3992
 And wel I woot the substance is in me
 If any thyngt shal wel reported be
 Sir' / sey somewhat of huntynge I yow preye
 ¶ Nay quod this Monk / I haue no lust to pleye 3996
 Now lat another telle / as I haue toold̄
 Thanne spak oure hoost with rude speche *and* boold̄
 And seyde / vn-to the Nonnes preest anon
 Com neer thou preest. com hyder thou *sir* Iohn 4000
 Telle vs swich thyngt as may oure hertes glade
 Be blithe / though̄ thou ryde vp-on a Iade
 What thogh̄ thyn hors / be bothe foule and lene
 If he wol serue thee / rekke nat a bene 4004
 Locke / that thyn herte / be murie eueremo
 ¶ Yis sir' quod he / yis hoost so moot I go
 But I be myrie / ywis I wol be blamed
 And right anon / his tale he hath attamed 4008
 And thus he seyde / vn-to vs euerichon
 This sweete preest. this goodly man *sir* Iohn

¶ Explicit

[8 lines blank in the MS.]

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Nonnes Preestes tale of ^[leaf 183]
the Cok^t and Hen Chauntecleer and Pertelote

A poure wydwe / somdel stape in Age
Was whilom dwellyng^t. in a narwe cotage 4012.
Beside a greue / stondynge in a dale
This wydwe / of which I telle yow my tale
Syn thilke day / that she was last a wyf/ [Painting of the
Nun's Priest]
In pacience / ladde a ful symple lyf/ 4016
ffor litel / was hir catel and hir rente
By housbondrie / of swich as god hire sente
She foond hir self / and eek hire doghtren two
Thre large sowes / hadde she and namo 4020
Three keen / and eek a sheep þat highite Malle
fful sooty / was hir bour/ and eek hire halle
In which she eet^t ful many a sklendre Meel
Of poynaunt sauce / hir neded neuer a deel 4024
No deyntee morsel / passed thurgh hir throte
Hir diete / was accordant^t to hir Cote
Repleccioñ / ne made hire neuere sik /
Attempree diete / was al hir phisik / 4028
And exercise / and hertes suffisaunce
The goute / lette hire no-thing^t for to daunce
Napoplexie / shente nat hir heed^t
No wyn ne drank / she / neither whit ne reed^t 4032
Hir bord was serued moost^t with whit and blak^t
Milk^t and broun breed / in which she foond no lak^t
Seynd Bacoñ / and somtyme an Ey or tweye
ffor she was / as it were / a maner deye 4036
¶ A yeerd^t she hadde / enclosed al aboute
With stikk^tes / and a drye dych with-oute
In which / she hadde a Cok^t heet^t Chauntecleer
In al the land^t / of crowyng nas his peer 4040

His voys was murier / than the murie Orgon
 On Messedayes / that in the chirche gon
 Wel sikerer / was his crowyng^t in his logge
 Than is a Clokke / or an abbey Orlogge 4044
 By nature / he crew eche Ascencioun
 Of the equynoxial in thilke toun
 ffor whan degrees fiftene weren ascended
 Thanne crew he / that it myghte nat been amended 4048
 His Coomb was redder / than the fyn coral
 And batailled / as it were a Castel wal
 His byle was blak^t and as the Ieet it shoon
 Lyk Asure / were hise legges and his toon 4052
 Hise nayles / whiter than the lylve flour
 And lyk^t the burned gold / was his colour
 This gentil Cok^t. hadde in his gouernaunce [leaf 183, back]
 Seuene hennes / for to doon al his plesaunce 4056
 Whiche were / hise sustres and his paramours
 And wonder lyk^t to hym / as of colours
 Of whiche / the faireste hewed / on hir throte
 Was cleped / faire damoysele Pertelote 4060
 Curteys she was / discreet and debonaire
 And compaignable / and bar hyr self so faire
 Syn thilke day / þat she was seuen nyght oold^t
 That trewely / she hath the herte in hooold^t 4064
 Of Chauntecleer / loken in euery lith
 He loued hire so / þat wel was hym therwith
 But swiche a ioye was it^t to here hem syng
 Whan þat / the brighte sonne / bigan to sprynge 4068
 In sweete accord^t / My lief is faren in londe
 ffor thilke tyme / as I haue vnderstonde
 Beestes and briddes / koude speke and syng
 ¶ And so bifel / that in the dawenyng 4072
 As Chauntecleer / among hise wyues alle
 Sat on his perche / that was in the halle
 And next hym / sat this faire Pertelote
 This Chauntecleer / gan groningen in his throte 4076

As man þat in his dreem / is drecched soore
 ¶ And whan that Pertelote / thus herde hym roore
 She was agast' and seyde o herte deere
 What eyleth yow / to grone in this manere 4080
 Ye been a verray sleper' / fy for shame
 ¶ And he answerde / and seyde thus ? / madame
 I pray yow / that ye take it nat agrief'
 By god me thoughte / I was in swich meschief' 4084
 Right now / þat yet myn herte is soore afright'
 Now god quod he / my sweuene recche aright'
 And kepe my body / out of foul prisoun
 Me mette / how that I romed vp and down 4088
 With-Inne our yeerd' / wheer as I saugh a beest'
 Was lyk an hound / and wolde han maad areest'
 Vpon my body / and han had me deed'
 His colour / was bitwixe yelow and reed' 4092
 And tipped was his tayl / and bothe hise eeris
 With blak / vnlyk' the remenant' of hise heeris
 His snowte smal / with glowynge eyen tweye
 Yet of his look'. for feere almost I deye 4096
 This caused me / my gronyng' doutelees
 ¶ Avoy quod she / fy on yow hertelees
 Allas quod she / for by that god aboue
 Now han ye lost' myn herte and al my loue 4100
 I kan nat loue a Coward' / by my feith
 ffor certes / what so any womman seith
 We alle desiren / if it myghite bee [leaf 184]
 To han housbondes / hardy wise and free 4104
 And secree / and no Nygard' / ne no fool
 Ne hym / þat is agast of euery tool
 Ne noon auauntour / by that god aboue
 How dorste ye seyn for shame / vn-to youre loue 4108
 That any thyng' myghite make yow aferd'
 Haue ye no mannes herte / and han a berd'
 ¶ Allas and konne ye been agast' of sweuenys
 No thyng' god woot' / but vanitee in sweuene is 4112

- Sweuenes / engendren of repleccioñs
 And ofte of fume / and of compleccioñs
 Whan humours / been to habundant^t in a wight^t
 ¶ Certes this dreem / which ye han met to-nyght^t 4116
 Cometh / of gret superfluytee
 Of youre rede Colera pardee
 Which causeth folk / to dreden in hir dremes
 Of Arwes / and of fyre with rede lemes 4120
 Of grete beestes / that they wol hem byte
 Of contekes and of whelpes / grete and lyte
 Right as the humour/ of Malencolie
 Causeth ful many a man / in sleepe to crie 4124
 ffor feere of blake beres / or boles blake
 Or elles / blake deuceles wole hem take
 ¶ Of othere humours / koude I telle also
 That werken many a man / in sleepe ful wo 4128
 But I wol passe / as lightly as I kan
LO Catoñ which þat was so wys a man
 Seyde he nat thus / ne do no fors of dremes
 ¶ Now sire quod she / whan ye flee from the bemes 4132
 ffor goddes loue / as taak^t som laxatyf^t
 Vp peril of my soule / and of my lyf^t
 I conseilte yow the beste / I. wol nat lye
 That bothe of Colere / and of Malencolye 4136
 Ye purge yow / and for ye shal nat tarie
 Though in this toun / is noon Apothecarie
 I shal my self. to herbes techen yow
 That shul been / for youre hele / and for youre prow 4140
 And in oure yeerd^t / tho herbes shal I fynde
 The whiche han / of hire propretee by kynde
 To purge yow / bynethe and eek aboue
 ffor yet nat this / for goddes owene loue 4144
 Ye been ful coleryk^t of compleccioñ
 Ware the sonne / in his ascencioñ
 Ne fynde yow nat repleet^t of humours hoote.
 And if it do / I dar wel leye a grote 4148

That ye shul haue / a ffeuere terciane
 Or an Agu / that may be youre bane
 A day or two / ye shul haue digestyues [leaf 184, back]
 Of wormes / er ye take youre laxatyues 4152
 Of lawriol / Centaure / and ffumeterc
 Or elles of Ellebor / that groweth there
 Of katapuce / or of Gaitrys beryis
 Of herbe yue growyng^t in oure yeerd^t ther mery is 4156
 Pekke hem vp righ^t as they growe and ete hem yn
 Be myrie housbonde / for youre fader kyn
 Dredeth no dreem / I kan sey yow namoore
Madame quod he / graunt^t mercy of youre loore 4160
 But nathelees / as touchyng^t Daun Catoun
 That hath of wysdom / swich a greet renoun
 Though^t that he bad / no dremes for to drede
 By god / men may / in olde bookes rede 4164
 Of many a man / moore of Auctorite
 Than euere Caton was / so moot I thee
 That al the reuers seyn / of this sentence
 And han wel founden by experience 4168
 That dremes / been significacioñs
 As wel of Loye / as of tribulacioñs
 That folk enduren / in this lif present^t
 Ther nedeth / make of this noon Argument^t 4172
 The verray preeuē / sheweth it in dede
 ¶ Oon / of the gretteste Auctour / þat men rede ¶ Nota de Sompnio
 Seith thus / þat whilom two felawes wente
 On pilgrimage / in a ful good entente 4176
 And happed so / they coomen in a toun
 Wher as ther was / swich congregacioun
 Of peple / and eek^t so streit^t of herbergage
 That they ne founde / as mucche as o cotage 4180
 In which they bothe / mygh^te logged bee
 Wherfore / they mosten of necessitee
 As for that^t nygh^t departen compaignye
 And ech of hem / gooth to his hostelrye 4184

And took^t his loggyng^t as it wolde falle
 That oon of hem / was logged in a stalle
 ffer in a yeerd^t / with Oxen of the plough
 That oother man / was logged wel ynough 4188
 As was his Auenture / or his ffortune
 That vs gouerneth alle / as in commune
 ¶ And so bifel / þat longe er it were day
 .i. dremed
 This man mette in his bed ther as he lay 4192
 How þat his felawe / gan vp-on hym calle
 And seyde Allas / for in an Oxes stalle
 This nyght I shal be mordred / ther I lye
 Now helpe me deere brother / or I dye 4196
 In alle haste / com to me he sayde
 ¶ This man out of his sleepe / for feere abrayde
 But whan that he was wakened / of his sleepe [leaf 185]
 He turned hym / and took of it no keepe 4200
 Hym thoughte / his dreem nas but^t a vanitee
 Thus twies / in his slepyng^t dremed hee
 And atte thridde tyme / yet his felawe
 Cam as hym thoughte / and seide .I am now slawe 4204
 Bihoold my bloody woundes depe and wyde
 Arys vp erly / in the morwe tyde
 And at the West gate / of the toun quod he
 A Carte / ful of donge / ther shaltow se 4208
 In Which / my body is hid / ful priuely
 Do thilke Carte / arresten boldly
 My gold caused my mordre / sooth to sayn
 And tolde hym euery point^t how he was slayn 4212
 With a ful pitous face / pale of hewe
 And truste wel / his dreem he foond ful trewe
 ffor on the morwe / as soone as it was day
 To his felawes In / he took the way 4216
 And whan þat he cam / to this Oxes stalle
 After his felawe / he bigan to calle
 ¶ The hostiler / answerde hym anon
 And seyde sire / your^t felawe is agon 4220

As soone as day / he wente out of the toun
 ¶ This man / gan fallen in suspecioun
 Remembrynge / on hise dremes / þat he mette
 And forth he gooth / no lenger wolde he lette 4224
 Vn-to the westgate of the toun / and fond
 A dong Carte / as it were to donge lond
 That was arrayed / in that same wise
 As ye han herd / the dede man deuyse 4228
 And with an hardy herte / he gan to crye
 Vengeance and Iustice / of this felonye
 My felawe / mordred is / this same nyght
 And in this Carte / heere he lith gapyng vpright 4232
 I crye out on the Ministres quod he
 That sholden kepe / and reulen this Citee
 Harrow allas / heere lith my felawe slayn
 What sholde I moore / vn-to this tale sayn 4236
 The peple out sterte / and caste the Cart to grounde
 And in the myddel of the dong they founde
 The dede man / that mordred was al newe
O blisful god / that art so Iust and trewe ¶ Auctor
 Lo / howe þat thou biwreyest mordre alway 4241
 Mordre wol out / that se we day by day
 Mordre / is so wlatson / and abhomynable
 To god / that is so Iust and resonable 4244
 That he / ne wol nat / suffre it heled be
 Though it abyde / a yeer / or two / or thre
 Mordre wol out this my conclusioun [leaf 185, back]
 And right anon / Ministres of that toun 4248
 Han hent the Carter / and so soore hym pyned
 And eek the hostiler / so soore engyned
 That they biknewe / hire wikkednesse anon
 And were an-hanged / by the nekke bon 4252
 ¶ Heere may men seen / þat dremes been to drede
 And certes / in the same book / I rede
 Right in the nexte Chapitre after this
 I gabbe nat. so haue I ioye or blis 4256

Two men / that wolde han passed ouer see ¶ *Adhuc de sompno*
 ffor certeyn cause / in to a fer contree
 If that the wynd / ne hadde been contrarie
 That made hem / in a Citee for to tarie 4260
 That stood ful myrie / vpon an hauen syde
 But on a day / agayn the euen tyde
 The wynd gan chaunge / and blew right^r as hem leste
 Iolif and glad / they wente vn-to hir reste 4264
 And casten hem / ful erly for to saille
 ¶ But herkneht / to that o man / fil a greet meruaille
 That oon of hem / in slepyng^r as he lay
 Hym mette a wonder dreem / agayn the day 4268
 Him thoughte / a man stood by his beddes syde
 And hym comanded / þat he sholde abyde
 And seyde hym thus / if thou tomorwe wende
 Thow shalt be dreynt^r my tale is at an ende 4272
 ¶ He wook / and tolde his felawe what he mette
 And preyde hym / his viage to lette
 As for that day / he preyde hym to byde
 ¶ His felawe / that lay / by his beddes syde 4276
 Gan for to laughē / and scorned him ful faste
 No dreem quod he / may so myn herte agaste
 That I wol lette / for to do my thynges
 I sette nat a straw / by thy dremynges 4280
 ffor sweuenes / been but vanytees and Iapes
 Men dreme al day / of Owles / or of Apes
 And of many a maze / ther-with-al
 Men dreme of thyng^r þat neuere was ne shal 4284
 But siþh I see / that thou wolt^r heere abyde
 And thus forslewthen / wilfully thy tyde
 God woot it reweth me / and haue good day
 And thus / he took his leue / and wente his way 4288
 But er þat he hadde / half his cours yseyled
 Noot I nat why / ne what myschaunce it eyled
 But casuelly / the shippes botme rente
 And shipe and man / vnder the water wente 4292

In sighte of othere shippes / it bisyde
 That with hem seyled / at the same tyde
 And therefore / faire Pertelote so deere [leaf 186]
 By swiche ensamples olde / yet maistow leere 4296
 That no man / sholde been to recchelees
 Of dremes / for I seye thee doutelees
 That many a dreem / ful soore is for to drede
LO / in the lyf of seint kenelm / I rede ¶ *De sompno sancti kenelmi*
 That was kenulphus sone / the noble kyng^t
 Of Mertenrike / how kenelm mette a thyng^t
 A lite er he was mordred / on a day
 His mordre / in his Auysioñ he say 4304
 His Norice / hym expowned euery deel
 His sweuene / and bad hym for to kepe hym weel
 ffor traisoñ / but he nas but .vij. yeer oold^t
 And therefore / litel tale hath he toold^t 4308
 Of any dreem / so hooly is his herte
 By god / I hadde leuere than my sherte
 That ye hadde rad his legende / as haue I.
 Dame Pertelote / I sey yow trewely 4312
 Macrobeus / that writ the Avisioñ
 In Affrike / of the worthy Cipioñ
 Affermeth dremes / and seith þat they been
 Warnynge of thynges / þat men after seen 4316
 ¶ And forther-moore I pray yow looketh wel ¶ Adhue de sompnijs
 In the olde testament^t of Daniel
 If he / heeld dremes any vanitee
 ¶ Reed eek^t of Iosephⁿ / and ther shul ye see 4320
 Wher dremes be somtyme / I sey nat alle
 Warnynge / of thynges / þat shul after falle
 ¶ Looke of Egipte / the kyng^t daun Pharao
 His Baker^t / and his Butiller also 4324
 Wher they ne felte noon effect^t in dremes
 Who so wol seken actes / of sondry Remes
 May rede of dremes / many a wonder thyng^t
 ¶ Lo Cresus / which þat was of Lyde kyng^t 4328

Mette he nat^t that he sat vp-on a tree
 Which signified / he sholde anhangd beo
 ¶ Lo heere Adromacha / Ectores wyf^t
 That day / that Ector / sholde lese his lyf^t 4332
 She dremed / on the same nyght biforn
 How þat the lyf of Ector / sholde be lorne
 If thilke day / he wente in-to bataille
 She warned hym / but^t it myghte nat auaille 4336
 He wente / for to fighte natheles
 But he was slayn anon of Achilles
 But thilke tale is al to longe for to telle
 And eek^t it is ny day / I may nat dwelle 4340
 Shortly I seye / as for conclusiõ
 That I shal han / of this Avisiõ
 Aduersitee /. and I seye forthermoor [leaf 186, back]
 That I ne telle / of laxatyues no stoor 4344
 ffor they been venymes / I woot it weel
 I hem diffye / I loue hem neuer a deel
 ¶ Now let vs speke of myrthe / and stynte al this
 Madame Pertelote / so haue I blis 4348
 Of o thyng^t god hath sent me large grace
 ffor whan I se / the beautee of youre face
 Ye been so scarlet^t reed / aboute youre eyen
 It maketh / al my drede for to dyen 4352
 ffor al so siker / as In principio
 Mulier est^t hominis confusio
 ¶ Madame / the sentence / of this latyn is
 Womman is mannes Ioye / and al his blis 4356
 ffor whan I feele a nyght^t your^t softe syde
 Al be it^t that I may nat^t on yow ryde
 ffor þat oure perche / is maad so narwe allas
 I am so ful of ioye / and of solas 4360
 That I diffye / bothe sweuene and dreem
 And with that word / he fly down fro the beam
 ffor it was day / and eke hise hennes alle
 And with a chuk / he gan hem for to calle 4364

ffor he hadde founde a corn / lay in the yerð
 Real he was / he was namoore aferð
 And fethered Pertelote / twenty tyme
 And trad as ofte / er it was pryme 4368
 He looketh / as it were / a grym leoun
 And on hise toos / he rometh vp and down
 Hym deigned nat' to sette his foot to grounde
 He chukketh / whan he hath a corn yfounde 4372
 And to hym rennen thanne / hise wyues alle
 Thus roial / as a prince is in an halle
 Leue I this Chauntecleer / in his pasture
 And after / wol I telle / his auenture 4376
Whan þat the Monthe / in which the world bigan
 That highte March / whan god first makod man
 Was compleet' and passed were also
 Syn March bigan / thritty dayes and two 4380
 Bifel / that Chauntecleer / in al his pryde
 Hise seuene wyues / walkynge by his syde
 Caste vp hise eyen / to the brighte sonne
 That in the signe of Taurus / hadde yronne 4384
 Twenty degrees and oon / and som-what moore
 And knew by kynde / and by noon oother loore
 That it was Pryme / and crew *with* blisful steuene
 The sonne he seyde / is clomben vp on heuene . 4388
 ffourty degrees and oon / and moore ywis
 Madame Pertelote / my worldes blis
 Herkneth thise blisful briddes / how they synge [leaf 187]
 And se / the fresshe floures / how they sprynge 4392
 fful is myn herte / of reuel and solas
 But sodeynly / hym fil a sorweful cas
 ffor euere / the latter ende of ioye is wo
 God woot' þat worldly ioye / is soone ago 4396
 And if a Rethor / koude faire endite
 He in a Cronycle saufly myghite it write
 As for a souereyn notabilitee ¶ Petrus Comestor
 Now euery wys man / lat him herkne me 4400

This storie / is al so trewe I vndertake
 As is the book / of launcelot' de lake
 That wommen holde / in ful greet reuerence
 Now wol I / come / agayn to my sentence 4404
A Colfox / ful of sly Iniquitee
 That in the groue / hadde wonned yeres three
 By heigh ymaginacioñ / forn-cast'
 The same nyght / thurgh-out the hegges brast' 4408
 In-to the yerd / ther Chauntecleer the faire
 Was wont' and eek hise wyues to repaire
 And in a bed of wortes / stille he lay
 Til it was passed / vndren of the day 4412
 Waitynge his tyme / on Chauntecleer to falle
 As gladly / doon thise homycides alle
 That in await ligen / to mordre men
 O false mordroure / lurkyng in thy den 4416
 O newe Scariot' newe Genylon
 ffalse dissynulour / o greek' synon
 That broghtest Troye / al outrely to sorwe
 O Chauntecleer / acursed be that morwe 4420
 That thou in-to that yerd' / flaugh fro the bemes
 Thou were / ful wel ywarned by thy dremes
 That thilke day / was perilous to thee
 But what þat god forwoot' moot nedes bee 4424
 After the opinioñ / of certein clerkis
 Witnesse on hym / that any parfit clerk' is
 That in scole / is greet altercacioñ
 In this mateere / and greet disputisoñ 4428
 And hath been / of an hundred thousand men
 But I ne kan nat' bulte it to the bren
 As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn
 Or Boece / or the Bisshope Bradwardyn 4432
 Wheither / that goddes / worthy forwityng'
 Streyneth me / nedefully to doon a thyng'
 Nedely / clepe I / symple necessitee
 O' elles / if free choys be graunted me 4436

To do that same thyng^t. or do it noght^t
 Though god forwoot^t it^t er þat it was wroght^t
 Or if his wityng^t. streyneth neuer a decl [leaf 187, back]
 But by necessitee condicionel 4440
 I wil nat han to do / of swich mateere
 My tale is of a Cok^t. as ye may heere
 That took his conseil / of his wyf *with* sorwe
 To walken in the yerð / vpon that morwe 4444
 That he hadde met that dreem / þat I of tolde
 Wommennes conseils / been ful ofte colde
 Wommannes conseil / broghte vs first to wo
 And made Adam / out of Paradys to go 4448
 Ther as he was ful myrie / and wel at ese
 But for I noot^t to whom it myght displese
 If I / conseil of wommen wolde blame
 Passe ouer / for I seye it in my game 4452
 Rede Auctours / where they trete / of swich mateere
 And what they seyn of wommen / ye may heere
 Thise been the Cokkes wordes / and nat myne
 I kan noon harm / of no womman diuyne 4456
Faire in the soond^t / to bathe hire myrily
 Lith Pertelote / and alle hire sustres by
 Agayn the sonne / and Chauntecleer so free
 Soong^t murier / than the Mermayde in the see 4460
 ffor Phisiologus / seith sikerly
 How þat they syngen / wel and myrily
 ¶ And so bifel / that as he cast his eye
 Among^t the wortes / on a Boterflye 4464
 He was war of this fox / þat lay ful lowe
 No-thing^t ne liste hym thanne for to crowe
 But cride anon cok / cok / and vp he sterte
 As man / that was affrayed in his herte 4468
 ffor natureelly / a beest^t desireth flee
 ffro his contrarie /. if he may it see
 Though he neuer erst^t. hadde seyn it *with* his eye
 ¶ This Chauntecleer / whan he gan hym espye 4472

He wolde han fled / but that the fox anon
 Seyde gentil sire / allas wher wol ye gon
 Be ye affrayed of me / that am youre freend^t
 Now certes / I were worse than a feend^t 4476
 If I to yow / wolde harm / or vileynye
 I am nat come / your conseil for tespye
 But trewely / the cause of my comynge
 Was oonly / for to herkne how that ye synge 4480
 ffor trewely / ye haue as myrie a steuene
 As any Aungel / that is in heuene
 Ther-with ye han in Musyk^t moore feelynge
 Than hadde Boece / or any þat kan synge 4484
 My lord youre fader / god his soule blesse
 And eek youre mooder / of hire gentillesse
 Han in myn hous ybeen / to my greet ese [leaf 188]
 And certes sire / ful fayn wolde I yow plesse 4488
 ¶ But for men speke of syngyng^t I wol yow seye
 So moote I brouke wel / myne eyen tweye
 Saue yow / herde I neuere man yet synge
 As dide youre fader / in the morwenynge 4492
 Certes / it was of herte / al that he song^t
 And for to make / his voys / the moore strong^t
 He wolde so peyne hym / that *with* bothe hise eyen
 He moste wynke / so loude he wolde cryen 4496
 And stonden on his tiptoon / ther-with-al
 And strecche forth his nekke / long^t and smal
 And eek he was / of swich discreciõ
 That ther nas / no man in no Regiõ 4500
 That hym / in song^t or wisdom mygh^te passe
 I haue wel rad / in daun Burnel the Asse
 Among^t hise *vers* / how that ther was a Cok^t
 ffor that a preestes sone / yaf hym a knok^t 4504
 Vp-on his leg^t whil he was yong and nyce
 He made hym / for to lese his benefice
 But certeyn / ther nys no comparisiõ
 Bitwixe / the wisdom / and discreciõ 4508

Of youre fader / and of his subtiltee
 Now syngeth sire / for seinte charitee
 Lat se / konne ye youre fader countrefete
 ¶ This Chauntecleer / hise wynges gan to bete 4512
 As man / þat koude his traysoñ nat espie
 So was he rauyssñed with his flaterie
Allas ye lordes / many a fals flatour
 Is in youre Courtes / and many a losengeour 4516
 That plesen yow / wel moore by my feith
 Than he / that soothfastnesse / vn-to yow seith
 Redeth Ecclesiaste / of flaterye
 Beth war ye lordes / of hir trecherye 4520
 ¶ This Chauntecleer / stood hye vp on his toos
 Strecchyng his nekke / and heeld hise eyen cloos
 And gan to crowe / loude for the nones
 And daun Russeñ the fox / stirte vp atones 4524
 And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer
 And on his bak / toward the wode hym beer
 ffor yet' ne was ther no man / þat hym sewed
 ¶ O destinee / that mayst nat been eschewed 4528
 Allas / þat Chauntecleer / fleigh fro the bemes
 Allas / his wyf / ne roghte nat of dremes
 And on a friday / fil al this meschaunce
 ¶ O Venus / that art goddesse of plesaunce 4532
 Syn that thy seruant'. was this Chauntecleer [leaf 188, back]
 And in thy seruyce / dide al his poweer
 Moore for delit' than world to multiplie
 Why woltestow suffre hym / on thy day to dye 4536
 ¶ O Gaufreð deere Maister souerayn
 That' whan thy worthy kyng' Richard' was slayn
 With shot'. compleynedest' his deeth so soere
 Why ne hadde I now / thy sentence / and thy loore 4540
 The friday for to chide / as diden ye
 ffor on a friday / soothly slayn was he
 Thanne wolde I shewe yow / how þat I koude pleyne
 ffor Chauntecleres drede / and for his peyne 4544

¶ Certes / swich cry / ne lamentacion
 Was neuere / of ladyes maad / whan Ylion
 Was wonne / and Pirrus with his streite swerð
 Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam / by the berð 4548
 And slayn hym / as seith vs Eneydos
 As maden / alle the hennes in the clos
 Whan they had seyn / of Chauntecleer the sighte
 But soðeynly / dame Pertelote shrighite 4552
 fful louder / than dide Hasdrubales wyf
 Whan þat hir housbonde / hadde lost his lyf
 And þat the Romayns / hadde brend Cartage
 She was / so ful of torment and of rage 4556
 That wilfully / in-to the fyr she sterte
 And brende hir seluen / with a stedefast herte
 ¶ O woful hennes / right so criden ye
 As whan that Nero / brende the Citee 4560
 Of Rome / cryden senatours wyues
 ffor þat hir husbondes losten alle hir lyues
 With-uten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn
 Now turne I wole / to my tale agayn 4564

This sely wydwe / and eek hir doghtres two
 Herden these hennes crie / and maken wo
 And out at dores / stirten they anon
 And syen the fox / toward the groue gon 4568
 And bar vp-on his bak / the Cok away
 And cryden out harrow / and weylaway
 Ha. ha / the fox / and after hym they ran
 And eek with staues / many another man 4572
 Ran Colle oure dogge / and Talbot and Gerland
 And Malkyn / with a dystaf / in hir hand
 Ran Cow and Calf and the verray hogges
 So fered / for berkyng of the dogges 4576
 And shoutyng of the men and wommen eek
 They ronne so / hem thoughte hir herte brek
 They yolliden / as feendes doon in helle
 The dokes cryden / as men wolde hem quelle 4580

- The gees for feere / flowen ouer the trees [leaf 189]
 Out of the hyve / cam the swarm of bees
 So hydous was the noyse / a benedicitee
 Certes / he Iakke Straw / and his meynce 4584
 Ne made neuere / shoutes / half so shille
 Whan þat they wolden / any flemyng kille
 As thilke day / was maad vp-on the fox
 Of bras / they broghten bemes and of box 4588
 Of horn / of boon / in whiche they blewe and powped
 And ther-with-al / they skrieked / and they howped
 It semed / as that heuene sholde falle
 Now goode men / I pray yow herkneth alle 4592
Lo / how ffortune / turneth sodeynly
 The hope / and pryde / of hir enemy
 This Cok / that lay vpon the foxes bak'
 In al his drede / vn-to the fox he spak' 4596
 And seyde sire / if that I were as ye
 Yet wolde I seyn / as wys god helpe me
 Turneth agayn / ye proude cherles alle
 A verray pestilence / vp-on yow falle 4600
 Now am I come / vn-to the wodes syde
 Maugree youre heed / the Cox shal heere abyde
 I wol hym ete in feith / and that anon
 ¶ The fox answerde / in feith it shal be don 4604
 And as he spak that word / al sodeynly
 This Cok / brak from his mouth delyuerly
 And heighe vp-on a tree / he fleigh anon
 And whan the fox saugh / þat he was gon 4608
 ¶ Allas quod he / o Chauntecleer / allas
 I haue to yow quod he ydoon trespas
 In as muche / as I maked yow aferd
 Whan I yow hente / and broght in to this yerd 4612
 But sire I dide it'. of no wikke entente
 Com down / and I shal telle yow what I mente
 I shal seye sooth to yow / god help me so
 ¶ Nay thanne quod he / I shrewe vs bothe two 4616


And first I shrewe my self / bothe blood *and* bones
 If thou bigyle me / any offer than ones
 Thou shalt na moore / thurgh thy flaterye
 Do me to synge / and wynke with myn eye 4620
 ffor he that wynketh / whan he sholde see
 Al wilfully / god lat him neuere thee
 ¶ Nay quod the fox / but god yeue hym meschaunce
 That is so / vndiscreet of gouernaunce 4624
 That Iangleth / whan he sholde holde his pees
 ¶ Lo swich it is / for to be recchelees
 And necligent and truste on flaterye
 ¶ But ye / that holden / this tale a folye 4628
 As of a fox / or of a Cok and Hen [leaf 189, back]
 Taketh the moralite / goode men
 ffor seint Paul seith / þat al that writen is
 To oure doctrine / it is ywrite ywis 4632
 Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille
 Now goode god / if that it be thy wille
 As seith my lord / so make vs alle goode men ¶ *scilicet domi-*
 And brynge vs / to his heighe blisse Amen ¶ *nus Archiepis-*
 ¶ Heere is ended / the Nonnes preestes tale ¶ *copus Cantuari-*
 ¶ *ensis*

GROUP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

§ 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

ELLESMERE MS.

[THE PROEM.]

¶ The prologe of the Seconde Nonnes tale  (on ff 180, b^r)

(1)

THe Ministre and the Norice / vn-to vices 1
 Which that men clepe in Engliss^h ydelnesse
 That Porter of the gate is / of delices
 To eschue / and by hire contrarie / hire oppresse 4
 That is to seyn / by leueful bisynesse
 Wel oghten we / to doon al oure entente
 Lest that the feend^t / thurgh ydelnesse vs shente 7

(2)

ffor he / that^t with hise / thousand cordes slye 8
 Continuelly / vs waiteth to biclappe
 Whan he may man / in ydelnesse espye
 He kan so lightly / cacche hym in his trappe 11
 Til þat a man / be hent^t right by the lappe
 He nys nat war / the feend hath hym in honde
 Wel oghte vs werche / and ydelnesse withstonde 14

(3)

And though men dradden / neuere for to dye 15
 Yet seen men wel / by resoñ doutelees
 That ydelnesse / is roten slogardye
 Of which ther neuere comth / no good nencrees 18
 And seen / þat slouthe / it holdeth in a lees
 Only to slepe / and for to ete and drynke
 And to deuouren / al that othere swynke 21

(4)

And for to putte vs / fro swich ydelnesse	22
That cause is / of so greet confusioñ	
I haue heer doon / my feithful bisynesse	
After the legende / in translacioñ	25
Right of thy glorious lif and passioñ	
Thou <i>with</i> thy gerland/ wrogħt <i>with</i> rose and lilie	
Thee meene I / mayde and mooder Cecilie	28

(5)

A Nd thow / that flour of virgines art alle <small>¶ Inuocacio ad Ma- riam. [leaf 190]</small>	
Of whom that Bernard/ list so wel to write	
To thee / at my bigynnyng ^t first I call	
Thou confort of vs wrecches / do me endite	32
Thy maydens deeth / that wan thurgh hire merite	
The eterneel lyf / and of the feend victorie	
As man may after / reden in hire storie	35

(6)

Thow mayde and mooder / dogħiter of thy sone	36
Thow welle of mercy / synful soules cure	
In whom / that god for bountee / chees to wone	
Thow humble and heigh / ouer euery creature	39
Thow nobledest ^t so ferforth / oure nature	
That no desdeyn / the makere hadde of kynde	
His sone / in blood and flessħ / to clothe and wynde	42

(7)

With-Inne the Cloistre blisful of thy sydis	43
Took mannes shape / the eterneel loue and pees	
That of the tryne compas / lord and gyde is	
Whom erthe and see / and heuene out of relees	46
Ay heryen / and thou virgine wemmelees	
Baar of thy body / and dweltest mayden pure	
The creatour / of euery creature	49

(8)

Assembled is in thee / magnificence	50
With <i>mercy</i> / goodnesse / and <i>with</i> swich pitee	
That thou / that art the sonne of excellence	
Nat oonly / helpst hem that preyen thee	53
But often tyme / of thy benygnytee	
ful frely / er that men / thyn help biseche	
Thou goost biforn / and art hir lyues leche	56

(9)

Now help thow meeke / and blisful faire mayde	57
Me flemed wrecche / in this desert of galle	
Thynk' on the womman Cananee / that sayde	
That whelpes eten / somme of the crommes alle	60
That from hir lordes table / been yfalle	
And though that I / vnworthy sone of Eue	
Be synful / yet accepte my bileue	63

(10)

And for that feith is deed / with-uten werkis	64
So for to werken / yif me wit and space	
That I be quit fro thennes / þat moost derk is	
O thou / that art so fair / and ful of grace	67
Be myn Aduocat in that heighe place	
Theras with-uten ende / is songe Osanne	
Thow Cristes mooder / doghter deere of Anne	70

(11)

And of thy light my soule in prison lighte	[leaf 150, back]
That troubled is / by the contagiõ	
Of my body / and also by the wighte	
Of erthely lust and fals affecciõ	74
O hauene of refut o saluaciõ	
Of hem / þat been in sorwe / and in distresse	
Now helpe / for to my werk I wol me dresse	77

(12)

Yet preye I yow / þat reden that I write	78
fforyeue me / that I do no diligence	
This ilke storie / subtilly to endite	
ffor boþe haue I / the wordes and sentence	81
Of hym / that at the seintes reuerence	
The storie wroot ^t and folwen hire legende	
I pray yow / that ye wole my werk ^t amende	84

(13) [THE TALE.]

F irst wolde I / the name of seinte Cecile	<small>¶ Interpretacio nominis Cecilie / quam ponit frater Iacobus Ianuensis in legenda</small>
Expowne / as men may in hir storie see	
It is to seye in englissĥ / heuenes lilie	
ffor pure chaastnesse of virginitee	88
Or / for she whitnesse hadde of honestee	
And grene of Conscience / and of good fame	
The soote favour lilie / was hir name	91

(14)

Or Cecilie is to seye / the way to blynde	92
ffor she ensample was / by good techynge	
Or elles Cecile / as I writen fynde	
Is ioyned / by a manere conioynynge	95
Of heuene and lia / and heere in figurynge	
The heuene is set ^t for thoght ^t of hoolynesse	
And lia / for hire lastynge bisynesse	98

(15)

Cecile / may eek be seyde / in this manere	99
Wantynge of blyndnesse / for hir grete light ^t	
Of sapience / and for hire thewes cleere	
Or elles loo / this maydens name bright ^t	102
Of heuene and leos comth / for which by right ^t	
Men myghite hire wel / the heuene of peple calle	
Ensamble / of goode / and wise werkes alle	105


(16)

ffor leos / peple in engliss̄ is to seye	106
And right' as men may / in the heuene see	
The sonne and moone / and sterres euery weye	
Right so men goostly / in this mayden free	109
Syen of feith / the magnanymytee	
And eek' the cleernesse hool / of sapiencie	
And sondry werkes / brighte / of excellence	112

(17)

And right/ so / as this Philosophres write	[leaf 191]
That heuene is swift' and round / and eek brennynge	
Right so / was faire Cecilie the white	
fful swift' and bisy / euere in good werkyng	116
And round and hool / in good perseuerynge	
And brennynge euere / in charite ful brighte	
Now haue I yow declared what she highte	119

¶ Explicit/

¶ Here bigynneth the Seconde Nonnes tale / of the
lyf of Seinte Cecile 

(18)

T his mayden bright' Cecilie / as hir lif seith	
Was comen of Romayns / and of noble kynde	
And from hir Cradel / vp fostred in the feith	
Of Crist' and bar his gospel in hir mynde	
She neuere cessed / as I writen fynde	
Of hir preyere / and god to loue and drede	
Bisekyng hym / to kepe hir maydenhede	126

[Painting of the Second Nun]

(19)

And whan this mayden / sholde vn-to a man	127
Ywedded be / that was ful yong of age	
Which that ycleped was Valerian	
And day was comen / of hir marriage	130
She ful devout' and humble in hire corage	
Vnder hir robe of gold / that sat ful faire	
Hadde next hire fless̄h / yclad hire in an haire	133

(20)

And whil the Orgues / maden melodie	134
To god allone / in herte thus sang she	
O lord / my soule / and eek my body gye	
Vnwemmed / lest that it confounded be	137
And for his loue / that dyde / vp-on a tree	
Euery secunde / and thridde day she faste	
Ay biddynge / in hire orisons ful faste	140

(21)

The nyght cam / and to bedde moste she gon	141
With hire housbonde / as ofte is the manere	
And pryuely / to hym she seyde anon	
O sweete / and wel biloued spouse deere	144
Ther is a conseil / and ye wolde it heere	
Which that right fayn / I wolde vn-to yow seye	
So that' ye swere / ye shul me nat' biwreye	147

(22)

¶ Valerian / gan faste vn-to hire swere	[leaf 191, back]
That for no cas / ne thyng/ that myghte be	
He sholde neuere mo / biwreyen here	
And thanne at erst' to hym thus seyde she	151
I haue an Aungel / which that loueth me	
That with greet loue / wher so I wake or sleepe	
Is redy ay / my body for to kepe	154

(23)

And if he / may feelen out of drede	155
That ye me touche // or loue in vileynye	
He right anon / wol sle yow with the dede	
And in youre yowthe / thus ye sholden dye	158
And if that ye / in clene loue me gye	
He wol yow louen as me / for youre clenness	
And shewen yow / his ioie and his brightnesse	161

(24)

¶ Valerian / corrected / as god wolde	162
Answerde agayn / if I shal trusten thee	
Lat me that Aungel se / and hym biholde	
And if that it a verray Angel bee	165
Thanne wol I doon / as thou hast prayed me	
And if thou loue / another man / for sothe	
Right <i>wit</i> this swerd / thanne wol I sle yow bothe	168

(25)

Cecile answerde anon / right in this wise	169
If that yow list. the Angel shul ye see	
So <i>pat</i> ye trowe in Crist / and yow baptize	
Gooth forth / to Via Apia / quod shee	172
That fro this toun / ne stant but Miles three	
And to the poure folkes / <i>pat</i> ther dwelle	
Sey hem right thus / as that I shal yow telle	175

(26)

Telle hem / that I Cecile / yow to hem sente	176
To shewen yow / the goode Vrban the olde	
ffor secree thynges / and for good entente	
And whan that ye / Seint Vrban han biholde	179
Telle hym the wordes / whiche <i>pat</i> I to yow tolde	
And whan <i>pat</i> he / hath purged yow fro synne	
Thanne shul ye se / that Angel er ye twynne	182

(27)

¶ Valerian / is to the place ygon	183
And right as hym was taught / by his lernynge	
He foond this hooly / olde Vrban anon	
Among the Seintes buryeles lotynge	186
And he anon / with-ou ^{<i>J. latitantem</i>} ten tariynge	
Dide his message / and whan <i>pat</i> he it tolde	
Vrban for ioye / his handes gan vp holde	189

(28)

The teeris / from his eyen leet he falle	[leaf 192]
Almyghty lord / o Ihesu Crist' quod he	
Sower' of chast conseil / hierde of vs alle	
The fruyt' of thilke seed of Chastitee	193
That thou hast sowe in Cecile / taak to thee	
Lo / lyk a bisy bee / with-uten gile	
Thee serueth ay / thyn owene thral Cecile.	196

(29)

ffor thilke spouse / that she took right . now	197
fful lyk a fiȝers leoun / she sendeth heere	
As meke / as euere / was any lamb to yow	
And with that word / anon ther gan appere	200
An oold man / clad in white clothes cleere	
That hadde a book' <i>wit</i> letre of gold in honde	
And gan / bifore Valerian to stonde.	203

(30)

Valerian as deed / fil down for drede	204
Whan he hym saugh / and he vp hente hym tho	
And on his book / right thus he gan to rede	
O. lord. o. feith. o. god with-uten mo	207
O. Cristendom / and fader of alle also	
Abouen alle / ouer alle / euerywhere	
These wordes / al with gold ywriten were	210

(31)

Whan this was rad / thanne seyde this olde man	211
Leecestow this thyng' or no ? / sey ye or nay ^s	
I leue al this thyng / quod Valerian	
ffor oother thyng' than this / I dar wel say	214
Vnder the heuene / no wight' thynke may	
Tho vanysshed this olde man / he nyste where	
And Pope Vrban / hym cristned right there	217

(32)

¶ Valerian gooth hoom / and fynt Cecilie	218
With-Inne his chambre / with an Angel stonde	
This Angel / hadde / of Roses and ¹ of lilie ¹	[¹ - ¹ later]
Corones two / the which he bar in honde	221
And first to Cecile / as I vnderstonde	
He yaf that oon / and after gan he take	
That oother / to Valerian hir make	224

(33)

With body clene / and with vnwemmed thogh ^t	225
Kepeth ay wel / thise corones three	
fro Paradys to yow / haue I hem brogh ^t	
Ne neuere mo / ne shal they roten bee	228
Ne lese hir soote sauour / trusteth me	
Ne neuere wigh ^t shal seen hem w ^{it} h his eye	
But he be chaast ^t and hate vileynye	231

(34)

And thow Valerian / for thow so soone	[leaf 192, back]
Assentedest ^t to good conseil also	
Sey what thee list ^t and thou shalt han thy boone	
I haue a brother / quod Valerian tho	235
That in this world / I loue no man so	
I pray yow / that my brother may han grace	
To knowe the trouthe / as I do in this place	238

(35)

¶ The Angel seyde / god liketh thy requeste	239
And bothe / with the palm of martirdom	
Ye shullen come / vn-to his blisful feste	
And w ^{it} h that word ^t / Tiburce his brother coom	242
And whan that he / the sauour vndernoon	
Which that the Roses / and the lilies caste	
With-Inne his herte / he gan to wondre faste	245

(36)

And seyde / I wondre / this tyme of the yeer	246
Whennes / that soote sauour cometh so	
Of Rose and lilies / that I smelle heer	
ffor though I hadde hem / in myne handes two	249
The sauour / mygh̄te in me no depper go	
The sweete smel / þat in myn herte I fynde	
Hath chaunged me / al in another kynde	252

(37)

¶ Valerian seyde / two corones / han we	253
Snow white and Rose reed / that shynen cleere	
Whiche þat thyne eyen / han no mygh̄t to see	
And as thou smellest hem / thurgh my preyere	256
So shaltow seen hem / leeue brother deere	
If it so be / thou wolt' <i>with</i> -outen slouthe	
Bileue arigh̄t' and knowen verray trouthe	259

(38)

¶ Tiburce answerde / seistow this to me	260
In soothnesse / or in dreem I herkne this	
In dremes quod valerian / han we be	
Vn-to this tyme / brother myn ywis	263
But now at erst' in trouthe our dwellyng is	
How woostow this quod Tiburce / in what wyse ?	
Quod Valerian / that shal I thee deuyse	266

(39)

¶ The Aungel of god / hath me trouthe ytaugh̄t'	267
Which thou shalt seen / if that thou wolt reneye	
The ydoles and be clene / and elles naugh̄t'	
And of the myracle / of thise corones tweye	270
Saint Ambrose / in his preface list to seye	
Solempnely / this noble doctour deere	
Commendeth hym / and seith in this manere	273

(40)

¶ The palm of martirdom / for to receyue	[leaf 193]
Seinte Cecile / fulfild of goddes yifte	
The world / and eek hire chambre / gan she weyue	
Witnesse / Tyburces / and Cecilies shrifte	277
To whiche / god of his bountee wolde shifte	
Corones two / of floures wel smellynge	
And made his Angel / hem the corones brynge	280

(41)

The mayde hath brogħt men / to blisse aboue	281
The world hath wist / what it is worth <i>certeyn</i>	
Deuocioñ of Chastitee to loue	
Tho shewed hym Cecile / al open and pleyn	284
That alle ydoles / nys but a thyng in veyn	
ffor they been dombe / and therto they been deue	
And charged hym / hise ydoles for to leue	287

(42)

Who so / that troweth nat this / a beest he is	288
Quod tho Tiburce / if þat I shal nat lye	
And she gan kisse his brest. that herde this	
And was ful glad / he koude trouthe espye	291
This day / I take thee / for myn Allye	
Seyde this blisful / faire mayde deere	
And after that. she seyde as ye may heere	294

(43)

¶ Lo / right so / as the loue of Crist quod she	295
Made me thy brotheres wyf. right in that wise	
Anon for myn Allyee / heer take I thee	
Syn that thou wolt thýne ydoles despise	298
Go <i>with</i> thy brother now / and thee baptise	
And make thee clene / so þat thou mowe biholde	
The Angeles face / of which thy brother tolde	301

(44)

¶ Tiburce answerde / and seyde brother dere 302
 first tel me / whider þat I shal / and to what man ?
 To whom quod he s com forth / with right good cheere
 I wol thee lede / vn-to the Pope Vrban 305
 Til Vrban s brother myn Valerian
 Quod tho Tiburce /. woltow me thider lede
 Me thyneketh / that it were a wonder dede 308

(45)

Ne menestow nat Vrban / quod he tho 309
 That is so ofte / dampned to be deed
 And woneth in halkes / alwey to and fro
 And dar nat ones / putte forth his heed 312
 Men sholde hym brennen / in a fyr so reed
 If he were founde / or þat men myghte hym spye
 And we also / to bere hym compaignye 315

(46)

And whil we seken / thilke diuinitee [leaf 198, back]
 That is yhid / in heuene pryuely
 Algate / ybrend in this world shul we be
 To whom Cecile / answerde boldly 319
 Men myghten dreden / wel and skilfully
 This lyf to lese / myn owene deere brother
 If this were lyuyngge oonly and noon oother 322

(47)

But ther is bettre lif in oother place 323
 That neuere shal be lost ne drede thee noght
 Which goddes sone / vs tolde thurgh his grace
 That fadres sone / hath alle thyngt ywroght 326
 And al that wroght is / with a skilful thoght
 The goost. that fro the fader gan procede
 Hath sowled hem / with-uten any drede 329

(48)

By word and by myracle / goddes sone	330
Whan he was in this world declared heere	
That ther was oother lyf/ ther men may wone	
To whom answerde Tiburce / o suster deere	333
Ne seydestow right now / in this manere	
Ther nys but o god / lord in soothfastnesse	
And now of three / how maystow bere witnessse	336

(49)

¶ That shal I telle quod she / er I go	337
Right as a man / hath sapiences three	
Memorie / Engyn / and Intellect ^t also	
So / in beyng ^e / of diuinitee	340
Thre persones / may ther right wel bee	
Tho gan she hym / ful bisily to preche	
Of Cristes come / and of hise peynes teche	343

(50)

And many pointes / of his passiõ	344
How goddes sone / in this world was withholde	
To doon mankynde / pleyn remission	
That was ybounde in synne and cares colde	347
Al this thynge. she vn-to Tiburce tolde	
And after this / Tiburce in good entente	
With Valerian / to Pope Vrban he wente	350

(51)

^{qui. scilicet Vrbanus} That thanked god / and with glad herte and light ^t	351
He cristned hym / and made hym in that place	
Parfit ^t in his lernynge / goddes knyght ^t	
And after this / Tiburce / gat swich grace	354
That every day / he saugh in tyme and space	
The Aungel of god / and every maner boone	
That he god axed // it was sped ful soone	357

(52)

¶ It were ful hard / by ordre for to seyn	[leaf 194]
How manye wondres / Ihesus for hem wroghte	
But atte laste / to tellen short and pleyn	
The sergeantz / of the toun of Rome hem soghte	361
And hem / biforn Almache the Prefect broghte	
Which hem opposed / and knew al hire entente	
And to the ymage / of Iuppiter hem sente	364

(53)

And seyde / who so wol nat sacrifice	365
Swape of his heed / this my sentence heer	
Anon these martirs þat I yow deuyse	
Oon Maximus / that was an Officer	368
Of the Prefectes / and his Corniculer	
Hem hente / and whan he forth the Seintes ladde	
Hym self he weepe / for pitee that he hadde	371.

(54)

Whan Maximus / had herd the Seintes loore	372
He gat hym / of the tormentours leue	
And ladde hem to his hous / <i>with</i> -oute moore	
And with hir <i>prechyng</i> er that it were eue	375
They gonne / fro the tormentours to reue	
And fro Maxime / and fro his folk echone	
The false feith / to trowe in god allone	378

(55)

¶ Cecile cam / whan it was woxen nyght	379
With preestes / that hem cristned alle yfeere	
And afterward / whan day was woxen light	
Cecile hem seyde / with a ful stedefast cheere	382
Now Cristes owene knyghtes / leeue and deere	
Cast alle away / the werkes of derknesse	
And Armeth yow / in Armure of brightnesse	385

(56)

Ye han for sothe / ydoon a greet bataille	386
Youre cours is doon / youre feith han ye conserued	
Gooth to the corone of lif ^t that may nat faille	
The rightful Iuge / which þat ye han serued	389
Shal yeue it yow / as ye han it deserued	
And whan this thyng was seyde / as I deuysed	
Men ledde hem forth / to doon the sacrefise	392

(57)

But whan they weren / to the place broght ^t	393
To tellen shortly / the conclusioun	
They nolde encense / ne sacrificise right ^t nocht ^t	
But on hir knees / they setten hem adoun	396
With humble herte / and sad deuocioun	
And losten / bothe hir heuedes in the place	
Hir soules wenten / to the kyng ^t of grace	399

(58)

This Maximus / that saugh this thyng ^t bityde	[leaf 194, back]
With pitous teeris / tolde it anon right ^t	
That he hir soules / saugh to heuene glyde	
With Aungels / ful of cleernesse and of light ^t	403
And with this word / conuerted many a wight ^t	
ffor which Almachius / dide hym so bete	
With whippe of leed / til he the lif gan lete	406

(59)

¶ Cecile hym took / and buried hym anon	407
By Tiburce / and Valerian softly	
With-Inne hire buriyng ^t place vnder the stoon	
And after this / Almachius hastily	410
Bad hise Ministres / fecchen openly	
Cecile / so that she myghte in his presence	
Doon sacrifice / and Iuppiter encense	413

(60)

^{.scilicet Ministres} But they conuerted / at hir wise loore	414
Wepten ful soore / and yauen ful credence	
Vn-to hire word / and cryden moore and moore	
Crist goddes sone / with-uten difference	417
Is verray god / this is.oure sentence	
That hath so good a seruant / hym to serue	
This with o voys / we trowen / thogh we sterue	420

(61)

¶ Almachius / that herde of this doynge .	421
Bad fecchen Cecile / that he myghte hire see	
And alderfirst. lo this was his axynge	
What maner womman / artow quod he ?	424
I am a gentil womman born quod she	
I axe thee quod he / though it thee greeue	
Of thy Religioñ / and of thy bileeue	427

(62)

¶ Ye han bigonne / youre question folily	428
Quod she / that wolden two answeres conclude	
In o demande / ye axed lewedly	
Almache answerde / vn-to that similitude	431
Of whennes comth / thyn answeryng' so rude ?	
Of whennes quod she / ^s whan þat she was freyned	
Of Conscience / and of good feith vnfeyned	434

(63)

¶ Almachius seyde / ne takestow noon heede	435
Of my power / and she answerde hym	
Youre myght quod she / ful litel is to dreede	
ffor euery / mortal / mannes power nys	438
But lyke a bladdre / ful of wynd ywys	
ffor with a nedles poynt' whan it is blowe	
May al the boost of it' be leyd ful lowe	441

(64)

¶ fful wrongfully / bigonne thow quod he	[leaf 195]
And yet in wrongt is thy perseuerañce	
Wostow nat' how oure myghty princes free	
Han thus comanded / and maad ordinañce	445
That euery cristen wight' shal han penañce	
But if that he / his cristendom withseye	
And goon al quit'. if he wole it reneye	448

(65)

¶ Yowre princes erren / as youre nobleye dooth	449
Quod tho Cecile / and with a wood sentence	
Ye make vs gilty / and [it] is nat sooth	
ffor ye / that knowen wel oure Innocence	452
ffor as muche / as we doon a reuerence	
To crist' and for we bere a cristen name	
Ye putte on vs / a cryme / and eek a blame	455

(66)

But we that knowen / thilke name so	456
ffor vertuous / we may it nat withseye	
Almache answerde / chees oon of these two	
Do sacrifice / or cristendom reneye	459
That thou mowe now / escapen by that weye	
At which / the hooly blisful faire mayde	
Gan for to laughē / and to the Iuge sayde	462

(67)

¶ O Iuge / confus in thy nycetee	463
Woltow / that I reneye Innocence	
To make me / a wikked wight' quod she	
Lo / he dissymuleth heere / in Audience	466
He stareth / and he woodeth in his Aduertence	
To whom Almachius / vnsely wrecche	
Ne woostow nat' how far my myght' may strecche	469

(68)

Han nocht^t oure myghty princes / to me yeuen 470
 Ye bothe power / and Auctoritee
 To maken folk / to dyen or to lyuen
 Why spekestow / so proudly thanne to me 473
 I speke nocht / but stedfastly quod she
 Nat proudly / for I speke as for my syde
 We naten deedly / thilke vice of pryde 476

(69)

And if thou drede nat^t a sooth to heere^{i. audire} 477
 Thanne wol I shewe / al openly by right^t
 That thou hast maad / a ful gret lesyng^h heere
 Thou seyst^t thy Princes / han thee yeuen myght^t 480
 Bothe for to sleen / and for to quyken a wight^t
 Thou that ne mayst^t but oonly lyf bireue
 Thou hast^t noon oother power ne no leue 483

(70)

But thou mayst seyn / thy princes han thee maked [lf 195, bk]
 Ministre of deeth / for if thou speke of mo
 Thou lyst^t for thy power is ful naked
 Do wey thy booldnesse / seyde Almachius tho 487
 And sacrifie to oure goddes er thou go
 I recche nat^t what wrong^t þat thou me profre
 ffor I can suffre it / as a Philosophre. 490

(71)

¶ But thilke wronges / may I nat endure 491
 That thou spekest^t of oure goddes heere quod he
 Cecile answerde / o nyce creature
 Thou seydest no word / syn thou spak to me 494
 That I ne knew ther with / thy nycetee
 And that thou were / in euery maner wise
 A lewed Officer / and a veyn Iustise 497

(72)

Ther lakketh no thyng ^r . to thyne outter eyen	498
That thou nart blynd ^d / for thyng ^r þat we seen alle	
That it is stoon / þat men may wel espyen	
That ilke stoon / a god thow wolt it calle	501
I rede thee / lat thyn hand vp on it falle	
And taste it wel / and stoon thou shalt it fynde	
Syn that thou seest ^r nat ^r with thyne eyen blynde	504

(73)

It is a shame / that the peple shal	505
So scorne thee / and laughe at thy folye	
ffor <i>communly</i> / men woot it wel oueral	
That myghty god / is in hise heuenes hye	508
And these ymages / wel thou mayst espye	
To thee / ne to hem self ^r ne mowen noght <i>profite</i>	
ffor in effect ^r they been nat worth a myte	511

(74)

¶ These wordes / and swiche othere seyde she	512
And he weex wrooth / and bad men sholde hir lede	
Hom til hir house / and in hire hous quod he	
Brenne hire / right in a bath of flambes rede	515
And as he bad / right so was doon in dede	
ffor in a Bath / they gonne hire faste shetten	
And nyght and day / greet fyre they vnder betten	518

(75)

¶ The longe nyght / and eek ^r a day also	519
ffor al the fyr / and eek the bathes heete	
She sat al coold / and feeled no wo	
It made hire / nat ^r a drope for to sweete	522
But in that Bath / hir lyf she moste lete	
ffor he Almachius / with a ful wikke entente	
To sleen hire in the Bath his sonde sente	525

(76)

Thre strokes in the nekke / he smoot hire tho	[leaf 196]
The tormentour / but for no maner chaunce	
He myghte noght smyte / al hir nekke atwo	
And for ther was / that tyme an ordinaunce	529
That no man / sholde doon men swich penaunce	
The ferthe strook / to smyten softe or soore	
This tormentour / ne dorste do namoore	532

(77)

But half deed / with hir nekke ycoruen there	533
He lefte hir lye / and on his wey he went	
The cristen folk / which that aboute hire were	
With sheetes / han the blood / ful faire yhent	536
Thre dayes lyued she / in this torment	
And neuere cessed / hem the feith to teche	
That she hadde fostred / hem she gan to preche	539

(78)

And hem she yaf / hir moebles / and hir thyngt	540
And to the Pope Vrban / bitook hem tho	
And seyde / I axed this at heuene kyngt	
To han respit. thre dayes and namo	543
To recomende to yow / er that I go	
Thise soules lo / and þat I myghte do werche	
Heere of myn hous / perpetuelly a cherche	546

(79)

¶ Seint Vrban / with hise deknes priuely	547
This body fette / and buryed it by nyghte	
Amongt hise othere seintes / honestly	
Hir hous / the chirche of seinte Cecilie highte	550
Seint Vrban halwed it / as he wel myghte	
In which / in to this day / in noble wyse	
Men doon to Crist. and to his seinte seruyse	553

¶ Heere is ended / the Seconde Nonnes tale 𐝱

¶ The prologe / of the Chanoñs yemannes tale ^[on leaf 196] 𐀀

- W**han toold was al the lyf /. of seinte Cecile
 Er we hadde riden / fully fyue Mile
 At Boghitoñ vnder Blee / vs gan atake
 A man / that clothed was / in clothes blake 557
 And vnder-nethe / he wered a surplys
 His hakeney / which þat was al pomely grys
 So swatte / that it wonder was to see
 It semed / as he had priked Miles three 561
 The hakeney eek / þat his yeman rood vpon
 So swatte / that vnnethe myghite it gon
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*] 565
 A Male tweyfoold / vp on his croper lay [leaf 196, back]
 It semed / that he caried lite array
 Al light for Somer / rood this worthy man
 And in myn herte / to wondren I bigan 569
 What þat he was / til that I vnderstood
 How that his cloke / was sowed to his hood
 ffor which / whan I hadde longe auysed me
 I demed hym / som Chanoñ for to be 573
 His hat heeng / at his bak / doun by a laas
 ffor he hadde riden / moore than trot' or paas
 He hadde ay priked/ lik as he were wood
 A Clote leef / he hadde vnder his hood 577
 ffor swoot' and for to kepe his heed from heete
 But it was ioye / for to seen hym swete
 His forheed dropped / as a stillatorie
 Were ful of Plantayne / and of Paritorie 581

- And whan that he was come / he gan to crye 582
 God saue quod he / this ioly compaignye
 ffaste haue I priked quod he / for youre sake
 By cause / that I wolde yow atake 585
 To riden / in som myrie compaignye
 His yeman eek^t was ful of curteisye
 And seyde sires / now in the morwe tyde
 Out of youre hostelrie / I saugh you ryde 589
 And warned heer / my lord and my souerayn
 Which / to ryden with yow / is ful fayn
 ffor his desport^t he loueth daliañce
 ¶ ffreend / for thy warnyng^t god yeue thee chañce 593
 Thanne seyde oure hoost^t. for certein / it wolde seme
 Thy lord were wys / and so I may wel deme
 He is ful iocunde also / dar I leye
 Can he oght^t telle / a myrie tale or tweye 597
 With which / he glade may this compaignye ?
 ¶ Who sire / my lord ? ye / ye with-outen lye
 He kan of murthe / and eek of Iolitee
 Nat but ynough^h / also sire trusteth me 601
 And ye hym knewe / as wel as do I
 Ye wolde wondre / how wel and craftily
 He koude werke / and that in sondry wise
 He hath take on hym /. many a greet emprise 605
 Which were ful hard / for any that is heere
 To brynge aboute / but they of hym it leere
 As hoomely / as he rit^t amonges yow
 If ye hym knewe / it wolde be for youre prow 609
 Ye wolde nat forgoon his Aqueyntaunce
 ffor muchel good / I dar leye in balauñce
 Al that I haue / in my possessiouz
 He is a man / of heigh^h discreciouz 613
 I warne yow wel / he is a passyng man [leaf 197]
 ¶ Wel quod oure hoost^t. I pray thee tel me than
 Is he a clerk / or noon ? telle what he is
 ¶ Nay / he is gretter than a clerk ywis 617

- Seyde this yeman / and in wordes fewe 618
 Hoost' of his craft' som what I wol yow shewe
 ¶ I seye / my lord / kan swich subtilitee
 But al his craft / . ye may nat wite for me 621
 And som what helpe I yet' to his wirkyng'
 That al this ground / on which we been ridyng'
 Til that we come / to Caunterbury toun
 He koude al clene / turne it vp so down 625
 And paue it / al of siluer / and of gold
 ¶ And whan this yeman / hadde this tale ytold'
 Vn-to oure hoost/ he seyde benedicitee
 This thyng' is wonder merueillous to me 629
 Syn that thy lord / is of so heigh prudence
 By cause of which / men sholde hym reuerence
 That of his worshipe / rekketh he so lite
 His ouerslope / nys nat worth a myte 633
 As in effect' to hym / so moot I go
 It is al baudy / and to-tore also
 Why is thy lord so sluttiss' I the preye
 And is of power/ better clooth to beye 637
 If that his dede / accorde with thy speche
 Telle me that'. and that I thee biseche
 ¶ Why quod this yeman^s wherto axe ye me^s ?
 God help me so / for he shal neuere thee 641
 But I wol nat' auowe that I seye
 And therefore / keepe it secree I yow preye
 He is to wys / in feith / as I bileeue
 That' that is ouerdoon / it wol nat preeue
 Aright' ^s/ as clerkes seyn / it is a vice
 ¶ Omne quod est
 nimum &cetera
 Wherefore in that' I holde hym lewed and nyce
 ffor whan a man / hath ouer greet a wit'
 fful oft hym happeth / to mysusen it' 649
 So dooth my lord / and that me greueth soore
 God it amende / I kan sey yow namoore
 ¶ Ther-of no fors / good yeman / quod oure hoost'
 Syn of the konnyng' of thy lord thow woost' 653

- Telle how he dooth / I pray thee hertely 654
 Syn that he is / so crafty and so sly
 Where dwelle ye / if it to telle be ?
- ¶ In the suburbes / of a toun quod he 657
 Lurkyng in hernes / and in lanes blynde
 Where as thise robbours / and thise theues by kynde
 Holden / hir pryuee fereful residence
 As they / that dar nat shewen hir presence 661
 So faren we / if I shal seye the sothe [leaf 197, back]
- ¶ Now quod oure hoost /. lat me telle to the
 Why artow / so discoloured of thy face ?
- ¶ Peter quod he / god yeue it harde grace 665
 I am so vsed / in the fyr to blowe
 That it hath chaunged my colour I trowe
 I am nat wont/ in no Mirour to prie
 But swynke soore / and lerne multiplie 669
 We blondren euere / and pouren in the fir
 And for al that / we faille of oure desir
 ffor euere we lakke / of oure conclusiō
 To muchel folk / we doon illusiō 673
 And borwe gold / be it a pound or two
 Or ten / or twelue / or manye sommes mo
 And make hem / wenen at the leeste weye
 That of a pound / we koude make tweye 677
 Yet is it fals / but ay we han good hope
 It for to doon / and after it we grope
 But that science / is so fer vs biforn
 We mowen nat' al though we hadden sworn 681
 It ouer-take / it slit away so faste
 It wole / vs maken beggers atte laste
- ¶ Whil this yeman / was thus in his talkyng'
 This Chanoñ drough hym neer / and herde al thyng' 685
 Which this yeman spak / for suspeciō
 Of mennes speche / euere hadde this Chanoñ
 ffor Catoñ seith / that he that giltly is ¶ Cato.
 Demeth alle thyng'. be spoke of hym ywis 689

That was the cause / he gan so ny/ hym drawe	690
To his yeman / to herknen al his sawe	
And thus he seyde / vn-to his yeman tho	
Hoold thou thy pees / and spek no wordes mo	693
ffor if thou do / /thou shalt it deere aby	
Thou sclaudrest me / heere in this compaignye	
And eek' discouerest' that thou sholdest hyde	
¶ Ye quod our hoost / telle on what so bityde	697
Of al his thretyng' rekke nat a myte	
¶ In feith quod he / namoore I do but lyte	
¶ And whan this Chanon / saugh it wolde nat be	
But his yeman / wolde telle his pryuetee	701
He fledde away / for verray sorwe and shame	
¶ A quod the yeman / heere shal arise game	
Al that I kan / anon now wol I telle	
Syn he is goon / the foule feend hym quelle	705
ffor neuere heer / wol I with hym meete	
ffor peny ne for pound' / I yow biheete	
He that me broghte first' vn-to that game	
Er that he dye / sorwe haue he and shame	709
ffor it is / earnest to me by my feith	[leaf 198]
That feele I wel / what that any man seith	
And yet for al my smert' and al my grief	
ffor al my sorwe / labour / and meschief	713
I koude neuere leue it / in no wise	
Now wolde god / my wit myghte suffise	
To tellen / al that longeth / to that Art'	
And napelees / yow wol I tellen part'	717
Syn that my lord is goon / I wol nat spare	
Swich thyng' as that I knowe / I wol declare	
¶ Heere endep þe prologe of the Chanoīs yemannes tale 𐀀	

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Chanoñs yeman his tale ^[on leaf 198] 

[THE PREAMBLE.]

With this Chanoñ / I dwelt haue seuen yeer
 And of his science / am I neuer the neer
 Al that I hadde / I haue lost ther-by
 And god woot^t so hath many mo than I
 Ther I was wont^t to be right fressh and gay
 Of clothyng^t and of oother good array 725
 Now may I were / an hose vp-on myn heed^t
 And wher my colour / was bothe fressh and reed^t
 Now is it wan / and of leden hewe
 Who so it vseth / soore shal he rewe 729
 And of my swynk / yet blered is myn eye
 Lo / which auantage / is to multiplie
 That slidyng^e science / hath me maad so bare
 That I haue no good / wher þat euere I fare 733
 And yet^t I am endetted so ther-by
 Of gold / that I haue borwed trevely
 That whil I lyue / I shal it quite neuere
 Lat euery man / be war by me for euere 737
 What maner man / that casteth hym ther to
 If he continue / I holde his thrift ydo
 ffor so helpe me god / ther-by shal he nat wynne
 But empte his purs / and make hise wittes thynne 741
 And whan he / thurgh his madnesse and folye
 Hath lost his owene good / thurgh Iupartye
 Thanne he exciteth / oother folk / ther-to 744
 To lesen hir good / as he hym self hath do
 ffor vn-to shrewes / ioye it is and ese
 To haue hir felawes / in peyne and disese

¶ Solacium miser-
 iorum &cetera.

Thus was I / ones lerned of a Clerk
 Of that no charge / I wol speke of oure werk^t 749
 ¶ Whan we been there / as we shul exercise
 Oure Elyysshe craft/ we semen wonder wise
 Oure termes / been so clergial / and so queynte [leaf 198, back]
 I blowe the fir / til that myn herte feynte 753
What sholde I tellen eche proporcioñ
 Of thynges / whiche þat we werche vpon
 As on fyue / or sixe Ounces / may wel be
 Of siluer / or som oother quantitee 757
 And bisye me / to telle yow the names
 Of Orpyment^t brent bones / Iren Squames
 That in-to poudre / grounden been ful smal
 And in an erthen pot^t put is al 761
 And salt yput In / and also papeer
 Biforn these poudres / that I speke of heer
 And wel ycouered / with a lampe of glas
 And muchel oother thyng / which þat ther was 765
 And of the pot^t and glasses enlutynge^t
 That of the Eyr/ myghte passe out no thyng^t
 And of the esy fir / and smart also
 Which that was maad / and of the care and wo 769
 That we hadden / in oure matires sublymyng^t
 And in Almagamyng^t and calcenyng^t
 Of quyke/ siluer / yclept Mercurie crude
 ffor alle our sleightes / we kan nat conclude 773
 Oure Orpyment. and sublymed Mercurie
 Oure grounden litarge eek^t in the P[o]rfurie
 And ech of these / of Ounces a certeyn
 Noght helpeth vs / oure labour is in veyn 777
 Ne eek^t oure spirites Ascencioun
 Ne oure matires / þat lyen al fix adoun
 Mowe in oure werkyng^t no thyng vs auaille
 ffor lost is / al oure labour and traueille 781
 And al the cost/ a twenty deuel way
 Is lost also / which we vp-on it lay

¶ Ther is also / ful many another thyng ^t	
That is / vn-to oure craft apertenyn ^t	785
Thogh ^h I by ordre / hem nat reherce kan	
By cause / that I am a lewed man	
yet wol I telle hem / as they come to mynde :	
Thogh ^h I ne kan nat ^t sette hem in hir kynde	789
As Boole / armonyak ^t vertgrees / Boras	
And sondry vessels / maad of erthe and glas	
Oure vrynals / and our descensories	
Violes / crosletz / and sublymatories	793
Cucurbites / and Alambikes eek ^t	
And othere swiche / deere ynough ^h a leek ^t	
Nat nedeth it ^t for to reherce hem alle	
Watres rubifyng ^t and Boles galle	797
Arsenyk / sal Armonyak ^t and Brymstoon	
And herbes / koude I telle eek many oon	
As Egremoyne / Valerian / and lunarie	[leaf 199]
And othere swiche / if that me liste tarie	801
Oure lampes brennyng ^t bothe nyght and day	
To brynge aboute / oure purpos / if we may	
Oure fourneys eek / of Calcinacio ⁿ	
And of watres Albificacio ⁿ	805
Vnslekked lym / Chalk / and gleyre of an ey ^t	
Poudres diuerse / ass ^h ies / donge / pisse / and cley	
Cered pottes / sal Peter / vitriole	
And diuerse fires / maad of wode and cole	809
Sal tartre / Alkaly / and sal preparat ^t	
And combust ^t matires / and coagulat ^t	
Cley / maad with hors / and mannes heer and oille	
Of Tartre / Alum glas / berme / wort ^t and argoille	813
Resalgar / and oure matires enbibyng ^t	
And eek ^t of oure matires encorporyng ^t	
And of oure siluer citrinacio ⁿ	
And of oure cementyng ^t and fermentacio ⁿ	817
Oure yngottes / testes / and many mo	

I wol yow telle / as was me taught also

The seuene spirites / and the bodies seuene	
By ordre / as ofte I herde my lord hem neuene	821
¶ The firste spirit ^t quyk siluer called is	
The seconde Orpyment ^t the thridde ywis	
Sal Armonyak / and the ferthe Brymstoon	
The bodyes seuene eek/. lo hem heere anoon	825
¶ Sol gold is / and Luna / siluer we threpe	
Mars Iren / Mercurie quyk siluer we clepe	
Saturnus leed / and Iuppiter is tyn	
And Venus Coper / by my fader kyn	829
¶ This cursed craft/ who so wole excercise	
He shal no good han / þat hym may suffise	
ffor al the good / he spendeth ther aboute	
He lese shal / ther-of haue I no doute	833
Who that listeth / outen his folie	
Lat hym come forth / and lerne multiplie	
And euery man / that oght hath in his cofre	
Lat hym appiere / and wexe a Philosophre	837
Ascauns / that craft is so light to leere	
Nay nay god woot ^t al be he Monk or frere	
Preest ^t or Chanoñ / or any oother wyght ^t	
Though ^h he sitte at his book ^t bothe day <i>and</i> nyght ^t	841
In lernyng ^t of this Elyysshe nyce loore	
Al is in veyn / and parde muchel moore	
To lerne a lewed man this subtiltee	
ffy spek ^t nat ther-of / for it wol nat bee	845
And konne he letterure / or konne he noon	
As in effect ^t . he shal fynde it al oon	
ffor bothe / two / by my sauacioñ	[leaf 199, back]
Concluden in multiplicacioñ	849
Ylike wel / whan they han al ydo	
This is to seyn / they failen bothe two	
Y et/ forgat I / to maken rehersaille	
Of watres corosif / and of lymaille	853
And of bodies mollificacioñ	
And also / of hire induracioñ	

Oilles / Ablucions / and metal fusible
 To tellen al / wolde passen any Bible 857
 That owher is / wherfore as for the beste
 Of alle thise names / now wol I me reste
 ffor as I trowe / I haue yow toold ynowe
 To reyse a feend / al looke he neuer so rowe 861
 ¶ A nay lat be / the Philosophres stoon
 Elixer clept. / we sechen faste echoon
 ffor hadde we hym / thanne were it siker ynow
 But vn-to god of heuene / I make avow 865
 ffor al oure craft' whan we han al ydo
 With al oure sleighte / he wol nat come vs to
 He hath maad vs spenden muchel good
 ffor sorwe of which / almost we wexen wood 869
 But that good hope / crepeth in oure herte
 Supposynge / though we sore smerte
 To be releued / by hym afterward'
 Swich supposyng' and hope / is sharpe *and* hard' 873
 I warne yow wel / it is to seken euere
 That futur temps / hath maad men disseuere
 In trust ther-of / from al þat euere they hadde
 Yet of that Art' they kan nat wexen sadde 877
 ffor vn-to hem / it is a bitter sweete
 So semeth it' for nadde they but a sheete
 Which þat they myghte wrappe hem Inne at nyght'
 And a brat' to walken Inne by day lyght' 881
 They wolde hem selle / and spenden on the craft'
 They kan nat stynte / til no thyng be laft'
 And euere moore / where þat euere they goon
 Men may hem knowe / by smel of Brymstoon 885
 ffor al the world / they stynken as a goot'
 Hir sauour / is so rammyssh and so hoot'
 That' though a man / a Mile from hem be
 The sauour wole infecte hym truste me 889
 And thus by smel / and threedbare array
 If þat men liste / this folk they knowe may

And if a man / wole aske hem pryuely
 Why they been clothed / so vnthriftily 893
 They right anon / wol rownen in his ere
 And seyn / þat if þat they espied were
 Men wolde hem slee / by cause of hir science [leaf 200]
 Lo / thus / this folk' bitrayen Innocence 897
Passe ouer this / I go my tale vn-to
 Er þat the pot' be on the fir ydo
 Of metals / with a certeyn quantitee
 My lord hem tempreth / and no man but he 901
 Now he is goon / I dare seyn boldely
 ffor as men seyn / he kan doon craftily
 Algate I woot wel / he hath swich a name
 And yet ful oft / he renneth in a blame 905
 And wite ye how / ful ofte it happeth so
 The pot tobreketh / and farewel al is go
 Thise Metals / been of so greet violence
 Oure walles / mowe nat make hem resistance 909
 But if they weren wroght / of lym and stoon
 They percen so / and thurgh the wal they goon
 And somme of hem / synke in to the ground
 Thus han we lost' by tymes many a pound 913
 And somme are scatered / al the floor aboute
 Somme lepte in-to the roof' with-outen doute
 Though þat the feend' / noght in oure sighte hym shewe
 I trowe he with vs be / that ilke shrewe 917
 In helle / where þat he lord is and sire
 Nis ther moore wo / ne moore rancour ne Ire
 Whan that oure pot is broke / as I haue sayd
 Euery man chit' and halt hym yuele apayd 921
 ¶ Somme seyde / it was along' on the fir making'
 Somme seyde nay / it was on the blowyng'
 Thanne was I feréd / for that was myn office
 ¶ Straw quod the thridde / ye been lewed and nyce 925
 It was nat tempred as it oghte be
 ¶ Nay quod the fourthe / stynt and herkne me

By cause our fir / ne was nat maad of Beech
 That is the cause / and oother noon so theech 929
 I kan nat telle / wher-on it was alongt
 But wel I woot greet strif vs is amongt
 ¶ What quod my lord / ther is namoore to doone
 Of these perils / I wol be war eft soone 933
 I am right siker / that the pot was crased
 Be as be may / be ye no thyngt amased
 As vsage is / lat swepe the floor as swithe
 Plukke vp youre hertes / and beeth glad *and* blithe 937
 ¶ The Mullok / on an heepe / sweped was
 And on the floor / ycast a Canevas
 And al this Mullok / in a syve ythrowe
 And sifted / and ypiked many a throwe 941
 ¶ Pardee quod oon / somewhat of oure metal
 Yet is ther heere / though þat we han nat al
 Al though this thyngt myshapped haue as now [leaf 200, back]
 Another tyme / it may be wel ynow 945
 Vs moste putte / oure good in auenture
 A Marchant pardee / may nat ay endure
 Trusteth me wel / in his prosperitee
 Somtyme his good / is ärenched in the see 949
 And somtyme / comth it sauf / vn-to the londe
 ¶ Pees quod my lord / the nexte tyme I shal fonde
 To bryngen oure craft / al in another plite
 And but I do / lat me han the wite 953
 Ther was defaute in som what wel I woot
 ¶ Another seyde / the fir was ouer hoot
 And be it hoot or coold / I dar seye this
 That we concluden / eueremoore amys 957
 We faille of that / which þat we wolden haue
 And in oure madnesse / eueremoore we raue
 And whan we been / togidres euerichoon
 Euery man / semeth a Salomon 961
 But euery thyngt which þat seineth as the gold ¶ Non tenas Au-
 rum &cetera
 Nis nat gold / as þat I haue herd told

Ne eevery appul / that is fair to eye ¶ *Nec pulcrum pomum &cetera*
 Nis nat good / what so men clappe or crye 965

¶ Right so / fareth it/ amonges vs

He þat semeth the wiseste by Ihesus

Is moost fool / whan it comth to the preef

And he þat semeth trewest is a theef/ 969

That shul ye knowe / er þat I fro yow wende

By that/ I of my tale haue maad an ende

¶ Explicit prima pars /

Et sequitur pars secunda 𐄂

[THE TALE.]

Ther was / a Chanoñ of Religioun
 Amonges vs / wolde infecte al a town 973
 Thogh it as greet were / as was Nynyuee
 Rome / Alisaundre / Troye / and othere three
 His sleighte / and his infinit falsnesse
 Ther koude no man / writen as I gesse 977
 Thoghþ þat he lyue myghte a thousandþ yeer
 In al this worldþ / of falshede nas his peer
 ffor in hise termes / so he wolde hym wynde
 And speke hise wordes / in so sly a kynde 981
 Whanne he commune shal with any wightþ
 That he wol make hym doten anon rightþ
 But it a feendþ be / as hym seluen is
 fful many a man / hath he bigiled er this 985
 And wole / if that he lyue may a while
 And yet men ride and goon ful many a Mile
 Hym for to seke / and haue his Aqueyntaunce [leaf 201]
 Noght knowynge / of his false gouernaunce 989
 And if yow listþ. to yeue me Audiance
 I wol it telle heere / in youre presence
 ¶ But worshipful Chanons Religious
 Ne demeth natþ. that I desclaundre youre hous 993
 Al-thoughþ that my tale / of a Chanoun bee
 Of euery ordre / som shrewe is pardee
 And god forbede / that al a compaignye
 Sholde rewe / o. singuleer mannes folye 997
 To selaundre yow / is no thyngþ myn entente
 But to correcten / that is mys I-mente

This tale / was nat oonly / toold for yow
 But eek / for othere mo / ye woot wel how 1001
 That among^t. cristes Apostles twelue
 Ther nas no traytour/ but Indas hym selue
 Thanne / why sholde al the remenant^t haue a blame
 That giltles were / by yow I seye the same 1005
 Saue oonly this / if ye wol herkne me
 If any Indas / in youre Couent^t be
 Remoeueth hym bitymes / I yow rede
 If shame / or los / may causen any drede 1009
 And beeth no thyng^t displeed I yow preye
 But in this cas / herketh what I shal seye
IN Londoñ / was a preest Annueleer
That ther-Inne / had dwelled many a yeer 1013
 Which was so plesaunt^t and so seruysable
 Vn-to the wyf / where as he was at table
 That she wolde suffre hym no thyng for to paye
 ffor bord ne clothyng^t wente he neuer so gaye 1017
 And spendyng^t siluer / hadde he right ynow
 Ther-of no fors / I wol procede as now
 And telle forth my tale / of the Chanon
 That broghte this preest/ to confusioñ 1021
 ¶ This false Chanon^t / cam vp on a day
 Vn-to this preestes chambre / wher he lay
 Bisechyng^e hym / to lene hym a certeyn
 Of gold / and he wolde quite it hym ageyn 1025
 Leene me a marc^e quod he / but dayes three
 And at my day / I wol it quiten thee
 And if so be / that thow me fynde fals
 Another day / do hange me by the hals 1029
 ¶ This preest hym took a marc^e and that as swithe
 And this Chanoun / hym thanked ofte sithe
 And took/ his leue / and wente forth his weye
 And at the thridde day / broghte his moneye 1033
 And to the preest / he took his gold agayn
 Wher-of this preest^t was wonder glad and fayn

- ¶ Certes quod he / no thyng/ anyeth me [leaf 201, back]
 To lene a man / a noble / or two / or thre 1037
 Or what thyng / were in my possession
 Whan he / so trewe is of condicioñ
 That in no wise / he breke wole his day
 To swich a man / I kan neuer seye nay 1041
- ¶ What quod this Chanoun / sholde I be vntrewe ?
 Nay that were a thyngt yfallen al of newe
 Trouthe is a thyngt that I wol euere kepe
 In to that day / in which that I shal crepe 1045
 In to my graue / or ellis god forbede
 Bileueth this / as siker as the Crede
 God thanke I / and in good tyme / be it sayd
 That ther was neuere man yet yuele apayd 1049
 ffor gold ne siluer / that he to me lente
 Ne neuere falshede / in myn herte I mente
 And sire quod he / now of my pryuetee
 Syn ye so goodlich / han been vn-to me 1053
 And kithed to me / so greet gentillesse
 Somwhat to quyte with youre kyndenesse
 I wol yow shewe / if that yow list to leere
 I wol yow teche / pleynly the manere 1057
 How I kan werken / in Philosophie
 Taketh good heede / ye shul wel seen at eye
 That I wol doon / a maistrie er I go 1060
- ¶ Ye quod the preest. ye sire quod he / and wol ye so ?
 Marie / ther-of / I pray yow hertely
 ¶ At youre comandement sire trewely
 Quod the Chanoñ / and ellis god forbeede
 ¶ Loo how this theef koude his seruice beede 1065
 fful sooth it is / that swich profred seruyse
 Stynketh / as witnessen thise olde wyse
 And that ful soone / I wol it verifie
 In this Chanoñ / roote of alle trecherie 1069
 That euere moore / delit hath and gladnesse
 Swiche feendly thoughtes / in his herte impresso

- How Cristes peple / he may to meschief / brynge
 God kepe vs / from his false dissymulynge 1073
- ¶ Noghit wiste this preest^t *with* whom þat he delt
 N[e] of his harm comynge / he no thyng felte
 O sely preest^t / o sely Innocent^t
 With coueitise / anon thou shalt be blent^t 1077
- O gracelees / ful blynd is thy conceite
 No thyng/ ne artow war/ of the deceite
 Which that this fox / yshapen hath for thee
 Hise wily wrenches / thou ne mayst nat flee 1081
- Wherfore to go / to the conclusion
 That refereth / to thy confusion
 Vnhappy man / anon I wol me hye [leaf 202]
 To tellen thyn vnwit^t / and his folye 1085
- And eek the falsnesse / of that oother wrecche
 As ferforth / as my konnyng^t may strecche
This Chanon was my lord^t / ye wolden weene 1089
 Sire hoost^t in feith / and by the heuenes queene
 It was another Chanoñ / and nat hee .
 That kan an hundred foold^t moore subtiltee
 He hath bitrayed folkes many tyme
 Of his falshede / it dulleth me to ryme 1093
- Euere whan þat I speke / of his falshede
 ffor shame of hym / my chekes wexen rede
 Algates / they bigynnen for to glowe
 ffor reednesse haue I noon / right wel I knowe 1097
- In my visage / for fumes diuerse
 Of metals / whiche ye han herd me reherce
 Consumed / and wasted han my reednesse
 Now taak heede / of this Chanons cursednesse 1101
- ¶ Sire quod he to the preest^t lat youre man gon
 ffor quyk siluer / that we hadde it anon
 And lat hym / bryngen Ounces two or three
 And whan he comth / as faste shal ye see 1105
- A wonder thyng^t which ye saugh neuere er this
 ¶ Sire quod the preest^t it shal be doon ywis .

He bad his seruant. fecchen hym this thyng^t
 And he al redy / was at his bidyng^t 1109
 And wente hym forth / and cam anon agayn
 With this quyk siluer / soothly for to sayn
 And toke thise Ounces thre / to the Chanoun
 And he hem leyde / faire and wel adoun 1113
 And bad the seruant. coles for to brynge
 That he anon / myghte go to his werkyng^e
 ¶ The coles / right anon weren yfet^t
 And this Chanoñ / took out a Crosselet^t 1117
 Of his bosom / and shewed it to the preest^t
 This Instrument quod he / which þat thou seest^t
 Taake in thyn hand^t / and put thy self ther Inne
 Of this quyk siluer an Ounce / and heer bigynne 1121
 In the name of Crist. to wexe a filosofre
 Ther been ful fewe / to whiche I wolde profre
 To shewen hem / thus muche of my science
 ffor ye shul seen / heer by experience 1125
 That this quyk siluer / wol I mortifye
 Right in youre sighte anon / I wol nat lye
 And make as good siluer / and as fyn
 As ther is any / in youre purse or myn 1129
 Or elleswhere / and make it malliable
 And elles / holdeth me / fals and vnable
 Amonges folk / for euere to appeere [leaf 202, back]
 I haue a poudre heer / þat coste me deere 1133
 Shal make al good / for it is cause of al
 My konnyng^t / which þat I to yow shewen shal
 Voyde youre man / and lat hym be ther oute
 And shette the dore / whils we been aboute 1137
 Oure pryuetee / that no man vs espie
 Whils that we werke / in this Philosophie
 ¶ Al as he bad / fulfilled was in dede
 This ilke seruant^t anonright^t out yede 1141
 And his Maister / shette the dore anon
 And to hire labour / spedily they gon

- ¶ This preest' at this cursed Chanons bidding'
 Vp on the fir/ anon sette this thyng' 1145
 And blew the fir / and bisyed hym ful faste
 And this Chanoñ / in-to the Crosselet cast
 A poudre noot I wher of / that it was
 Ymaad / ouþer of chalk' or of glas 1149
 Or som what elles / was nat worth a flye
 To blynde with the preest'. and bad hym hyc
 The coles / for to couchen al aboue
 The Crosselet'. for in tokenyng' I thee loue 1153
 Quod this Chanoñ / thyne owene handes two
 Shul werche al thyng/. which shal heer be do
 ¶ Graunt mercy quod the preest' and was ful glad
 And couched cole / as that Chanoñ bad 1157
 And while he bisy was // this feendly wrecche
 This false Chanoun / the foule feend' hym fecche
 Out of his bosom / he took/ a Bechen cole
 In which ful subtilly / was maad an hole 1161
 And ther-Inne / put was of siluer lemaille
 An Ounce / and stopped was *with*-outen faille
 The hole *with* wex / to kepe the lemaille In
 And vnderstondeth / that this false gyn 1165
 Was nat maad ther / but it was maad bifore
 And othere thynges / I shal tellen moore
 Herafterward' / whiche þat he *with* hym brogħite
 Er he cam there / hym to bigile he thoghite 1169
 And so he dide / er þat they wente atwynne
 Til he had terned hym / he koude nat blynne
 It dulleth me / whan that I of hym speke
 On his falshede / fayn wolde I me wreke 1173
 If I wiste how / but he is heere and there
 He is so variaunt / þat he abit nowhere
 ¶ But taketh heede / now sires for goddes loue
 He took' this cole / of which I spak aboue 1177
 And in his hand / he baar it pryuely
 And whils the preest' couched bisily

The coles / as I tolde yow er this [leaf 203]
 This Chanoñ seyde / freend ye doon amys 1181
 This is nat couched / as it oghte be
 But soone / I shal amenden it quod he
 Now lat me medle ther-with / but a while
 ffor of yow / haue I pitee by seint Gile 1185
 Ye been right hoot. I se wel how ye swete
 Haue heer a clooth / and wipe away the wete
 And whils þat the preest' wiped his face
 This Chanoñ / took his cole *with* harde *grace* 1189
 And leyde it aboue / vp on the myddeward
 Of the Crosselet. and blew wel afterward
 Til that the coles / gonne faste brenne
 ¶ Now yeue vs drynke / quod the Chanoñ thenne 1193
 As swithe al shal be wel I vndertake
 Sitte we down / and lat vs myrie make
 And whan þat / this Chanones¹ Bechen cole [1 MS ns]
 Was brent. al the lemaille out of the hole 1197
 In-to the Crosselet' fil anon adoun
 And so it moste nedes by resoun
 Syn it so euene / abouen it couched was
 But ther-of / wiste the preest' no thyng' alas 1201
 He demed alle the coles yliche good
 ffor of that sleighte / he no thyng' vnderstood
 And whan this Alkamystre saugh his tyme
 Ris vp quod he sire preest. and sit by me 1205
 And for I woot wel / Ingot haue I noon
 Gooth walketh forth and brynge vs a Chalk/ stoon
 ffor I wol make oon / of the same shape
 That is an Ingot. if I may han hape 1209
 And bryngeth eek *with* yow / a bolle or a panne
 fful of water / and ye shul se wel thanne
 How þatoure bisynesse / shal thryue & preue
 And yet' for ye shul han no mysbileue 1213
 Ne wrong conceite of me / in youre Absence
 I ne wol nat' been out of youre presence

- But go with yow / and come *with* yow ageyn
 The chambre dore / shortly for to seyn 1217
 They opened and shette / and wente hir weye
 And forth with hem / they carieden the keye
 And coome agayn / *with*-outen any delay
 What sholde I tarien / al the longe day 1221
 He took the Chalk' / and shoope it' in the wise
 Of an Ingot' as I shal yow deuyse
 ¶ I seye / he took/ out of his owene sleeue
 A teyne of siluer / yuele moot he cheeue 1225
 Which þat was nat' / but an Ounce of weighte
 And taak heede now / of his cursed sleighte
 ¶ He shoope his Ingot' in lengthe and eek' in breede [leaf 203]
 Of this teyne / *with*-outen any drede 1229
 So slyly / that the preest' it nat' espide
 And in his sleue / agayn he gan it hide
 And fro the fir/ he took vp his mateere
 And in thyngot' putte it *with* myrie cheere 1233
 And in the water vessel / he it caste
 Whan þat hym luste / and bad the preest as faste
 What þat heer is / put In thin hand and grope
 Thow fynde shalt ther siluer as I hope 1237
 [. [Not in Reg. 17 D xv,
 no gap in the MS.] leaf 210, bk. In Brit.
 Mus. Addit. 5140, leaf
 303, back; Reg. 18 C
 ii, ff 171; Harl. 7333,
 leaf 92, col. 1, &c.]
 He putte his hand In / and took vp a teyne
 Of siluer fyn / and glad in euery veyne 1241
 Was this preest'. whan he saugh it was so
 Goddes blessingt and his moodres also
 And alle halwes / have ye sire Chanoñ
 Seyde this preest'. and .I. hir malisoñ 1245
 But and ye vouche-sauf' to techen me
 This noble craft' and this subtiltee
 I wol be youre / in al that euere I may
 ¶ Quod the preest' yet wol I make assay 1249
 The seconde tyme / þat ye may taken heede
 And been expert' of this / and in youre neede

- Another day / assaye in myn absence
 This disciplyne / and this crafty science 1253
 Lat take another Ounce / quod he tho
 Of quyk siluer / with-uten wordes mo
 And do ther with / as ye han doon er this
 With that oother / which þat now siluer is 1257
 ¶ This preest hym bisieþ / in al þat he kan
 To doon / as this Chanoñ / this cursed man
 Comanded hym / and faste he blew the fir
 ffor to come / to theffect of his desir 1261
 And this Chanow / right in the meene while
 Al redy was / the preest eft to bigile
 And for a contenañce / in his hand he bar
 An holwe stikke / taak kepe and be war 1265
 In the ende of which / an Ounce and namoore
 Of siluer lemaille / put was as bifore
 In his cole / and stopped with wex weel
 ffor to kepe In / his lemaille euey deel 1269
 And whil this preest was in his bisynesse
 This Chanoñ / with his stikke gan hym dresse
 To hym anon / and his poudre caste In
 As he dide er / the deuel / out of his skyn 1273
 Hym terve / I pray to god / for his falshede
 ffor he was euere fals / in thoght and dede
 And with this stikke / aboute the Crosselet
 That was ordeyned / with that false Iet/ 1277
 He stired the coles / til relente gan [leaf 204]
 The wex agayn the fir / as euey man^s
 But it a fool be / woot wel it moot nede
 And al that in the stikke was out yede 1281
 And in the crosselet hastily it fel
 ¶ Now good sires / what wol ye bet than wel
 Whan þat this preest. thus was bigiled ageyn
 Supposynge noght but treuthe sooth to seyn 1285
 He was so glad / that I ne kan nat expresse
 In no manere / his myrthe and his gladnesse

And to the Chanoñ / he profred eftsoone
 Body and good / ye quod the Chanoñ soone 1289
 Though poure I be / crafty thou shalt me fynde
 I warne thee / yet is ther moore bihynde
 ¶ Is ther any coper / her Inne seyde he ?
 ¶ Ye quod the preest^t sire I trowe wel ther be 1293
 ¶ Elles go bye vs som / and that as swithe
 Now good sire / go forth thy wey and hy the
 ¶ He wente his wey / and with the coper cam
 And this Chanon / it in hise handes nam 1297
 And of that coper / weyed out^t but an Ounce
 ¶ Al to symple / is my tonge to pronounce
 As Ministre of my wit^t the doublenesse
 Of this Chanoñ / roote of alle cursednesse 1301
 He semed freendly / to hem / þat knewe hym noght^t
 But he was feendly / bothe in herte and thought^t
 It weerieth me / to telle of his falsnesse
 And nathelees / yet wol I it expresse 1305
 To thentente / that men may be war therby
 And for noon oother cause trewely
 ¶ He putte the Ounce of Coper in the Crosselet^t
 And on the fir / as swithe he hath it set / 1309
 And caste In poudre / and made the preest / to blowe
 And in his werkyng^t for to stoupe lowe
 As he dide er / and al nas but a Iape .
 Right as hym liste / the preest he made his Ape 1313
 And afterward^t / in the Ingot^t he it caste
 And in the panne / putte it at the laste
 Of the water / In he putte his owene hand^t
 And in his sleue / as ye biforn hand^t 1317
 Herde me telle / hadde a siluer teyne
 He slyly tooke it out / this cursed heyne
 Vnwityng^t this preest^t of his false craft^t
 And in the pannes botme / he hath it laft^t 1321
 And in the water / rombled to and fro
 And wonder pryuely / took vp also

The coper teyne / nocht knowynge this preest'
 And hidde it' and hym hente by the breest' 1325
 And to hym spak' and thus seyde in his game [leaf 204, back]
 Stoupeth adoun / by god ye be to blame
 Helpeth me now / as a dide yow whil eer
 Putte In youre hand / and looketh what is theer 1329
 ¶ This preest' took vp / this siluer teyne anon
 And thanne seyde the Chanon' / lat vs gon
 With thise thre teynes / whiche þat we han wroght'
 To som Goldsmyth' / and wite if they been ouht' 1333
 ffor by my feith / I nolde for myn hood'
 But if that they were siluer/ fyn and good'
 And that as swithe / preeued it shal bee
 ¶ Vn-to the Goldsmyth' / with thise teynes three 1337
 They wente / and putte thise teynes in Assay
 To fir and hamer / myghte no man seye nay
 But þat they weren / as hem oghte be
 ¶ This sotted preest'. who was gladder than he 1341
 Was neuere brid / gladder agayn the day
 Ne nyghtyngale / in the seson of May
 Nas neuere man / that luste bet to synge
 Ne lady / lustier in carolyng 1345
 Or for to speke of love and wommanhede
 Ne knyght in Armes / to doon an hardy dede
 To stonden in grace / of his lady deere
 Than hadde this preest' this soory craft to leere 1349
 And to the Chanon' / thus he spak and seyde
 ffor loue of god / that for vs alle deyde
 And as I may / deserue it vn-to yow
 What shal this receite coste / telleth now 1353
 ¶ By oure lady quod this Chanon' / it is deere
 I warne yow wel / for saue I and a frere
 In Engelonc' / ther kan no man it make
 ¶ No fors quod he / now sire for goddes sake 1357
 What shal I paye / telleth me I preye ?
 ¶ Ywis quod he / it is ful deere I seye

- Sire at o word / if that thee list it haue
 Ye shul paye fourty pound / so god me sauē 1361
 And nere the freendshipe / þat ye dide er this
 To me /. ye sholde paye moore y-wis
 ¶ This preest' the somme of fourty pound anon
 Of nobles fette / and took hem euerichon 1365
 To this Chanoñ / for this ilke receipt'
 Al his werkyng' nas but fraude and deceit'
 ¶ Sire preest he seyde / I kepe han no loos
 Of my craft / for I wolde it' kept were cloos 1369
 And as ye loue me / kepeth it secree
 ffor and men knewen / al my soutiltee
 By god / they wolden han so greet enuye
 To me / by cause / of my Philosophye 1373
 I sholde be deed / ther were noon oother weye [leaf 205]
 ¶ God it forbeede quod the preest/ what sey ye
 Yet hadde I leuere / spenden al the goodt
 Which þat I haue / or elles wexe I woodt 1377
 Than that ye sholden falle in swiche mescheef/
 ¶ ffor youre good wyl / sire haue ye right good preef
 Quod the Chanoñ / and farwel grant mercy
 He wente his wey / and neuer the preest hym sy 1381
 After that day / and whan þat this preest shooldē
 Maken assay / at swich tyme as he wolde
 Of this receipt / farwel / it wolde nat be
 Lo thus byiaped / and bigiled was he 1385
 Thus maketh he / his introduccioñ
 To brynge folk/ to [hir] destruccion
 Cōsidereth sires / how þat in ech estaat'
 Bitwixe men and gold / ther is debaat' 1389
 So ferforth / that vnnethe is ther noon
 This multiplying' blent so many oon
 That in good feith / I trowe þat it bee
 The cause grettest' of swich scarsetee 1393
 Philosophres / spoken so mystily
 In this craft' þat men kan nat come therby

ffor any wit þat men han now a dayes
 They mowe wel chiteren / as þat doon Ioyes [so] 1397
 And in hir termes / sette hir lust and peyne
 But to hir purpos / shul they neuere atteyne
 A man may lightly lerne / if he haue aught
 To multiplie / and brynge his good to naught 1401
 ¶ Lo / swich a lucre / is in this lusty game
 A mannes myrthe / it wol turne vn-to grame
 And empten also / grete and heuye purses
 And maken folk / for to purchacen curses 1405
 Of hem / þat han hir good / ther-to ylent
 ffy for shame / they þat han been brent
 Allas / kan they nat flee / the fires heete
 Ye that it vse / I rede ye it leete 1409
 Lest ye lese al / for bet than neuere is late
 Neuere to thryue / were to long a date
 Though ye prolle ay / ye shul it neuere fynde
 Ye been as boold as is Bayard the blynde 1413
 That blondreth forth / and peril casteth noon
 He is as boold / to renne agayn a stoon
 As for to goon / bisides in the weye
 So faren ye / that multiplie I seye 1417
 If þat youre eyen / kan nat seen aright
 Looke þat youre mynde / lakke noght his sight
 ffor though ye looken neuer so brode and stare
 Ye shul no thyng wyne on that chaffare 1421
 But wasten / al that ye / may rape and renne [leaf 205, back]
 Withdraweth the fir / lest it to faste brenne
 Medleth namoore / with that Art I mene
 ffor if ye doon / youre thrift is goon ful elene 1425
 And right as swithe / I wol yow tellen heere
 What þat the Philosophres seyn in this mateere
LO thus seith Arnold of the newe toun 1429
 As his Rosarie / maketh mencion
 He seith right thus / with-uten any lye
 Ther may no man / Mercurie mortifie

But it be / with his brother knowlechyngt
 How þat he / which þat first seyde this thyngt 1433
 Of Philosophres / fader first was hermes
 He seith / how þat the dragon doutelees
 Ne dyeth nat. but if that he be slayn
 With his brother/ and that is for to sayn 1437
 By the dragon / Mercurie and noon oother
 He vnderstood / and Brymstoon by his brother
 That out of sol / and Luna were ydrawe
 And therefore seyde he / taak heede to my sawe 1441
 Lat no man bisye hym / this Art for to seche
 But if þat he / thentencioñ and speche
 Of Philosophres / vnderstonde kan
 And if he do / he is a lewed man 1445
 ffor this science / and this konnyng quod he
 Is of the secree / of the secretes pardee
 ¶ Also / ther was a disciple of Plato
 That on a tyme / seyde his maister to 1449
 As his book senior / wol bere witesse
 And this was his demande in soothfastnesse
 Telle me the name / of the priuee stoon
 ¶ And Plato answerde / vn-to hym anoon 1453
 Take the stoon / that Titanos men name
 ¶ Which is that quod he ? Magnasia is the same
 Seyde Plato / ye sire / and is it thus ?
 This is / ignotum per ignocius 1457
 What is Magnasia / good sire I yow preye ?
 ¶ It is a water / that is maad I seye
 Of elementes foure quod Plato
 ¶ Telle me the roote / good sire quod he tho 1461
 Of that water / if it be youre wille
 ¶ Nay nay quod Plato / certein that I nylle
 The Philosophres / sworn were euerychoon
 That they / sholden discouere it vn-to noon 1465
 Ne in no book it write / in no manere
 ffor vn-to Crist / it is so lief and deere

That he wol nat that it discouered bee
 But where it liketh / to his deitee 1469
 Man for tenspire / and eek / for to deffende. [leaf 206]
 Whom þat hym liketh / lo this is the ende
 ¶ Thanne conclude I thus / sith þat god of heuene
 Ne wil nat that the Philosophres neuene 1473
 How þat a man / shal come vn-to this stoon
 I rede vs for the beste / lete it goon
 ffor who so / maketh god his Aduersarie
 As for to werken / any thyngt in contrarie 1477
 Of his wil / certes neuer shal he thryue.
 Thogh that he multiplie terme of lyue
 And there a poynt for ended is my tale 1480
 God sende euery trewe man / boote of his bale Amen 𐝰

¶ Heere is ended the Chanoñs yemannes tale 𐝰

GROUP H. FRAGMENT IX.

§ 1. THE MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK.

ELLESMERE MS.


¶ Heere folweth the Prologe / of the Maunciples
tale  [on leaf 206]

Woot ye nat' / where ther stant/ a litel toun
Which þat yelepēd is Bobbe up and doun
Vnder the Blee / in Caunterbury weye
Ther gan oure hoost' for to Iape and pleye 4
And seyde sires / what Dun is in the Myre
Is ther no man / for preyere ne for hyre
That wole awake / oure felawe al bihynde
A theef / myghte hym ful lightly robbe and bynde 8
See how he nappeth / see how for Cokkes bones
As he wol falle / fro his hors atones
Is that a Cook of Londoñ / with meschance
Do hym come forth / he knoweth his penaunce 12
ffor he shal telle a tale / by my fey
Al-though̄ / it be nat worth a Botel hey
Awake thou Cook' quod he / god yeue thee sorwe
What eyleth thee / to slepe by the morwe? 16
Hastow had fleen al nyght' or artow dronke?
Or hastow / with som quene / al nyght' yswonke?
So that thow mayst nat' holden vp thyn heek'
¶ This Cook / þat was ful pale and no thyng' reed' 20
Seyde to oure hoost'. so god my soule blesse
As ther is falle on me swich heynesse
Noot I nat why^s þat me were leuere slepe
Than / the beste galon wyn in Chepe 24

¶ Wel quod the Maunciple / if it may doon ese	25
To thee sire Cook / and to no wight ^t displese	
Which þat heere rideth / in this compaignye	
And that oure hoost/ wole of his curteisye	28
I wol now / excuse thee / of thy tale	
ffor in good feith / thy visage is ful pale	
Thyne eyen daswen eek ^t as that me thynketh	[leaf 206, bk]
And wel I woot / thy breath / ful soure stynketh	32
That sheweth wel / thou art nat wel disposed ^t	
Of me <i>certeyn</i> / thou shalt nat been yglosed ^t	
See how he ganeth / lo this dronken wight ^t	
As though he wolde / swolwe vs anonright ^t	36
Hoold cloos thy mouth man / by thy fader kyn	
The deuel of helle / sette his foot ther-In	
Thy cursed breeth / infecte wole vs alle	
ffy stynkyng ^t swyn / fy / foule moote thou falle	40
A taketh heede sires / of this lusty man	
Now sweete sire / wol ye Iusten atte ffan	
Therto me thynketh / ye been wel yshape	
I trowe / that ye dronken han wyn Ape	44
And that is / whan men pleyen with a straw	
And with this speche / the Cook ^t wax wrooth ^t & wraw	
And on the Manciple / he gan nodde faste	
ffor lakke of speche / and doun the hors hym caste	48
Where as he lay / til þat men vp hym took ^t	
This was / a fair chyuahee / of a Cook ^t	
Allas / he nadde / holde hym by his ladel	
And er þat he / agayn were in his Sadel	52
Ther was greet ^t showuyng ^t bothe to and fro	
To lifte hym vp / and muchel care and wo	
So vnweeldy / was this sory palled goost ^t	
And to the Manciple / thanne spak oure hoost/	56
¶ By cause / drynke / hath dominacioñ	
Vpon this man / by my sauacioñ	
I trowe / lewedly / he wolde telle his tale	
ffor were it wyn / or oold ^t / or moysty Ale	60

- That he hath dronke / he speketh in his nose 61
 And fneseth faste / and eek he hath the pose
 ¶ He hath also / to do moore than ynough
 To kepen hym and his Capul out of slough 64
 And if he falle / from his capul eftsoone
 Thanne shal we alle / haue ynogh to doone
 In lifyng vp / his heuy dronken cors
 Telle on thy tale / of hym make I no fors 68
 ¶ But yet Manciple / in feith thou art / to nyce
 Thus openly / repreue hym of his vice
 Another day / he wole peraenture
 Reclayme thee / and brynge thee to lure 72
 I meene / he speke wole / of smale thynges
 As for to pynchen / at thy rekenynges
 That were nat honeste / if it cam to preef /
 ¶ No quod the Manciple / that were a greet mescheef 76
 So myghte he lightly / brynge me in the snare
 Yet hadde I leuere / payen for the Mare
 Which that he rit on / than he sholde with me stryue
 I wol nat wratthen hym / al so moot I thryue ^[leaf 207]
 That that / I speke / I seyde it in my bourde 81
 And wite ye what I haue heer in a gourde
 A draghte of wyn / ye of a ripe grape
 And right anon / ye shul seen a good Iape 84
 This Cook shal drynke ther of / if þat I may
 Vp peyne of deeth / he wol nat seye me nay
 ¶ And certeynly / to tellen as it was
 Of this vessel / the Cook drank faste / allas s 88
 What neded hym / he drank ynough biforn
 And whan he hadde / pouped in this horn
 To the Manciple / he took the gourde agayn
 And of that drynke / the Cook was wonder fayn 92
 And thanked hym / in swich wise as he koude
 ¶ Thanne gan oure hoost to laughen wonder loude
 And seyde / I se wel / it is necessarie
 ¶ Where þat we goon / þat drynke we with vs carie 96

ffor that wol turne / rancour and disese	97
Tacord and loue / and many a wrongt apese	
¶ O Bacus / yblessed be thy name	
That so kanst' turnen / ernest' in-to game	100
Worshipe and thank' be to thy deitee	
Of that mateere / ye gete namoore of me	
Telle on thy tale / Manciple I thee preye	
¶ Wel sire quod he / now herkneth what I seye	104

¶ Heere bigynneth the Mañciples tale / of the
Crowe 

WHan Phebus / dwelled heere / in this world
As olde bookes / maken menciouñ [adoun]
He was / the mooste lusty Bachiler
In al this world / and eek the beste Archer

[Pointing of the Manciple.]

He slow Phitoñ / the serpent^t as he lay
Slepyngē / agayn the sonne vpon a day
And many another / noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wroghtē / as men may rede 112

¶ Pleyen he koude / on euery Mynstralcie
And syngen / that it was a melodie
To heeren / of his cleere voys the soun
Certes / the kyng^t of Thebes Amphioun 116

That with his syngyng^t walled that Citee
Koude neuere syngen / half so wel as hee
Therto he was / the semelieste man
That is or was / sith þat the world bigan 120

What nedeth it / hise fetures to discryue
ffor in this world / was noon so fair on lyue
He was ther-with / fulfild^t of gentillesse [leaf 207, back]
Of honour / and of parfit^t worthynesse 124

¶ This Phebus / that was / flour of Bachilrie
As wel / in fredom / as in Chiualrie
ffor his desport^t. in signe eek of Victorie
Of Phitoñ / so as telleth vs the storie 128
Was wont^t to beren in his hand a bowe

¶ Now hadde this Phebus / in his hous a crowe
Which in a Cage / he fostred many a day
And taughtē it speke / as men teche a Iay 132

- Whit was this Cröwe / as a snow whit swan 133
 And countrefete the speche of euery man
 He koude / whan he sholde telle a tale
 Ther-with in al this world / no nyghtyngale 136
 Ne koude / by an hondred thousand^d deel
 Syngen / so wonder myrily and weel
 ¶ Now hadde this Phebus / in his hous a wyf /
 Which þat he louede / moore than his lyf/ 140
 And nyght and day / dide euere his diligence
 Hir for to plesse / and doon hire reuerence
 Saue oonly / the sothe that I shal sayn
 Ialous he was / and wolde haue kept hire fayn 144
 ffor hym were looth / byiaped for to be
 And so is euery wight^t in swich degree
 But all in ydel / for it auailleth noght^t
 A good wyf / that is clene / of werk^t and thoght^t 148
 Sholde nat been kept^t in noon awayt certayn
 And trewely / the labour is in vayn
 To kepe a shrewe / for it wol nat bee
 This holde I / for a verray nycetee 152
 To spille labour / for to kepe wyues
 Thus writen olde clerkes / in hir lyues
Bvt now to purpos / as I first bigan
 This worthy Phebus / dooth all that he kan 156
 To plesen hire / wenyng that swich plesaunce
 And for his manhede / and his gouernaunce
 That no man / sholde han put hym from hire grace
 But god it woot^t. ther may no man embrace 160
 As to destreyne a thyng^t. which þat nature
 Hath naturelly / set in a creature
 ¶ Taak any bryd / and put it in a Cage ¶ Exemplum . de voluere
 And do al thyn entente / and thy corage 164
 To fostre it tendrely / with mete and drynke
 Of alle deyntees / þat thou kanst bithynke
 And keepe it^t al so clenly / as thou may
 Al though his Cage / of gold be neuer so gay 168

Yet hath this brid / by twenty thousand foold	169
Leuere in a fforest / that is rude and coold	
Goon ete wormes / and swich wrecchednesse	[leaf 206]
ffor euere this brid / wol doon his bisynesse	172
To escape out of his Cage / if he may	
His libertee / this brid desireth ay	
¶ Lat take a Cat and fostre hym wel with Milk	¶ Exemplum . de Murelego
And tendre flessñ / and make his couche of silk	176
And lat hym seen / a Mous go by the wal	
Anon he weyueth / Milk / and flessñ and al	
And eucry deyntee / that is in that hous	
Swich appetit he hath / to ete a Mous	180
Lo / heere hath lust his dominacioñ	
And Appetit fleemeth discrecioñ	
¶ A she wolf / hath also / a vileyns kynde	¶ Exemplum . de lupo
The lewedeste wolf / þat she may fynde	184
Or leest of reputacioñ / that wol she take	
In tyme / whan hir lust to han a make	
¶ Alle thise ensamples / speke I by thise men	
That been vntrewe / and no thyng by wommen	188
ffor men han euere / a likerous appetit	
On lower thyng to parfourne hire delit	
Than on hire wyues / be they neuer so faire	
Ne neuer so trewe / ne so debonaire	192
fflessñ is so newefangel with meschaunce	
That we ne konne / in no thyng han plesaunce	
That sowneth in-to vertu / any while	
¶ This Phebus / which þat thoghte vpon no gile	196
Deceyued was / for al his Iolitee.	
ffor vnder hym / another hadde shee	
A man / of litel reputacioñ	
Nat worth to Phebus / in comparisoñ	200
The moore harm is / it happeth ofte so	
Of which ther cometh / muchel harm and wo	
¶ And so bifel / whan Phebus was absent	
His wyf anon / hath for hir lemman sent	204

Hir lemman ? certes this is a knauyssh speche	205
fforyeueh it me / and that I yow biseche	
¶ The wise Plato seith / as ye may rede	
The word / moot nede accorde with the dede	208
If men shal telle proprely a thyng ^t	
The word / moot cosyn be to the werkyng ^t	
I am a boystous man / right thus seye I	
Ther nys no difference trewely	212
Bitwixe a wyf/ þat is of heigh degree	
If of hire body / dishoneste she bee	
And a poure wenche / ^s oother than this	
If it so be / they werke bothe amys	216
But þat the gentile / in hire estaat aboute	
She shal be cleped / his lady as in loue	
And for that oother / is a poure womman	[leaf 208, back]
She shal be cleped / his wenche / or his lemman	220
And god it woot ^t myn owene deere brother	
Men leyn þat oon / as lowe as lith þat oother	
¶ Right so / bitwixe a titleles tirañt/	
And an Outlawe / or a thief errañt ^t	224
The same I seye / ther is no difference	
To Alisaundre / was toold this sentence	
That for the tirañt ^t is of gretter myght ^t	
By force of meynee / for to sleen doun right ^t	223
And brennen hous <i>and</i> hoom / <i>and</i> make al playn	
Lo / therefore / is he cleped a Capitayn	
And for the Outlawe / hath but smal meynee	
And may nat doon / so greet an harm as he	232
Ne brynge a contree / to so greet mescheef/	
Men clepen hym / an Outlawe / or a thief /	
But for I am a man / noght textuel	
I wol noght telle / of textes neuer a deel	236
I wol go / to my tale / as I bigan	
Whan Phebus wyf / had sent for hir lemman	
Anon they wroghten / al hire lust volage	
¶ The white crowe / they heeng ay in the Cage	240

- Biheeld hire werk' and seyde neuer a word' 241
 And whan þat hoom was come Phebus the lord'
 This Crowe sang / Cokkow / Cokkow / Cokkow /
 ¶ What bryd quod Phebus / what song' syngestow ? 244
 Ne were thow wont/ so myrily to synge
 That to myn herte / it was a reioysynge
 To heere thy voys / allas what song is this ?
 ¶ By god quod he / I synge nat amys 248
 Phebus quod he / for al thy worthynesse
 ffor al thy beautee / and thy gentillesse
 ffor al thy song/ and thy Mynstralcye
 ffor al thy waityng' blered is thyn eye 252
 With oon / of litel reputacioñ
 Noghit worth to thee / in comparisoñ
 The montance of a gnat/ so moote I thryue
 ffor on thy bed / thy wyf / I saugh hym swy & *cetera* ¶ Nota
 ¶ What wol ye moore / the Crowe anon hym tolde malum
 By sadde tokenes / and by wordes bolde quid.
 How þat his wyf' had doon hire lecherye
 Hym to greet/ shame / and to greet vileynye 260
 And tolde hym ofte / he saugh it *with* hise eyen
 ¶ This Phebus / gan awayward for to wryen
 And thoughte / his sorweful herte brast atwo
 His bowe he bente / and sette ther-Inne a flo 264
 And in his Ire / his wyf / thanne hath he slayn
 This is theffect'. ther is namoore to sayn
 ffor sorwe of which / he brak his Mynstralcie [leaf 209]
 Bothe harpe / and lute / and Gyterne / and sautrie 268
 And eek' he brak hise Arwes / and his bowe
 And after that/ thus spak he to the crowe
 ¶ Traitour quod he / with tonge of Scorpion
 Thou hast me brogħt/ to my confusioñ 272
 Allas that I was wroghit / why nere I deed'
 O deere wyf' o gemme of lustiheed'
 That were to me / so sad / and eek' so trewe
 Now listow deed / *with* face pale of hewe 276

fful giltlees / that dorste I swere ywys	277
O rakel hand / to doon so foule amys	
O trouble wit' o Ire recchelees	
That vnaused / smyteth giltles	280
O wantrust' . ful of fals suspencion	
Where was thy wit' and thy discrecion	
O euery man / be war of rakelnesse	
Ne trowe no thyng' <i>wit</i> -outen strong wisesse	284
Smyt nat to soone / er þat ye witen why	
And beeth auysed / wel and sobrelly	
Er ye doon / any execucion	
Vp on youre Ire / for suspencion	288
Allas / a thousand folk' hath rakel Ire	
ffully fordoon / and broght hem in the Mire	
Allas / for sorwe .I wol my seluen slee	
¶ And to the Crowe / o false theef seyde he	292
I wol thee quite anon / thy false tale	
Thou songe whilom / lyk' a nyghtyngale	
Now shaltow false theef' thy song' forgon	
And eek thy white fetheres euerichon	296
Ne neuere in al thy lif/ ne shaltou speke	
Thus shal men / on a traytour been awreke	
Thou / and thyn of-spryng/ euere shul be blake	
Ne neuere / sweete voys shul ye make	300
But euere crie / agayn tempest' and rayn	
In tokenynge / þat thurgħ thee / my wyf is slayn	
And to the Crowe / he stirte / and that anon	
And pulled / hise white fetheres euerychon	304
And made hym blak' and refte hym al his song'	
And eek his speche / and out at dore hym slong'	
Vn-to the deuel / which I hym bitake	
And for this caas / been alle Crowes blake	308
L Ordynge / by this ensample I yow preye	
Beth war / and taketh kepe what I seye	
Ne telleth neuere / no man in youre lyf	
How þat another man / hath digħt his wyf /	312

He wol yow haten / mortally certeyn	313
Daun Salomon / as wise clerkes seyn	
Techeth a man / to kepen his tonge weel	[leaf 209, back]
But as I seyde / I am noght textuecl	316
But nathelees / thus taughte me my dame	
My sone / think/ on the Crowe on goddes name	
My sone / keepe wel thy tonge / and keepe thy frend	
A wikked tonge / is worse than a feend	320
My sone / from a feend / men may hem blesse	
My sone / god of his endelees goodnesse	
Walled a tonge / with teeth <i>and</i> lippes eke	
ffor man sholde hym auyse / what he speeke	324
My sone / ful ofte / for to muche speche	
Hath many a man been spilt ^t as clerkes teche	
But for litel speche / aysely	
Is no men shent ^t . to speke generally	328
My sone / thy tonge sholdestow restreyne	
At alle tymes / but whan thou doost thy peyne	
To speke of god / in honour and preyere	
The firste vertu sone / if thou wolt leere	332
Is to restreyne / and kepe wel thy tonge	
Thus lerne children / whan þat they been yonge	
My sone / of muchel spekyng/ yuele auysed	
Ther lasse spekyng/ hadde ynough suffised	336
Comth muchel harm / thus was me toold <i>and</i> taught ^t	
In muchel speche / synne wanteth naught ^t	
Wostow / wher-of a rakel tonge serueth	
Right as a swerd / forkutteth and forkerueth	340
An Arm atwo / my deere sone right so	
A tonge / kutteth freendshipe al atwo	
A Iangler ^r / is to god abhomynable	
Reed Salomon / so wys and honorable	344
Reed David in hise psalmes / reed Senekke	
My sone spek nat ^t but <i>with</i> thyn heed thou bekke	
Dissimule as thou were deaf / if that thou heere	
A Iangler ^r / speke of <i>per</i> ilous mateere	348

The flemyng ^t seith / and lerne it if thee leste	349
That litel Ianglyng ^t causeth muchel rest	
My sone / if thou no wikked word hast seyde	
Thee thar nat drede / for to be biwreyde	352
But he þat hath mysseyd / I dar wel sayn	
He may by no wey / clepe his word agayn	
Thyng that is seyde is seyde / and forth it gooth	
Though hym repente / or be hym leef / or looth	356
He is his thral / to whom þat he hath sayde	
A tale / of which he is now yuele apayde	
My sone be war / and be noon Auctour newe	
Of tidynges / wheither they been false or trewe	360
Wher' so thou come / amonges hye or lowe	
Kepe wel thy tonge / and thenk vp-on the Crowe	362
¶ Heere is ended / the Mañiciples tale of the Crowe	¶

GROUP I. FRAGMENT X.

§ 1. THE BLANK-PARSON LINK.

[This is really a link between some unwritten Tale and the Parson's. It has been made into the Manciple-Parson Link (or Yeoman-Parson by the Christ-Church MS) by Chaucer's copiers, though not meant for it.]


ELLESMERE MS.

¶ Heere folweth the Prologe / of the Person's tale [leaf 210]

BY that the Manciple / hadde his tale al ended.
The sonne / fro the south lyne was descended
So lowe / that he ne nas nat to my sighte
Degrees / nyne and twenty / as in highte 4
Ten of the Clokke / it was tho / as I gesse
ffor elleuene foot' or litel moore / or lesse
My shadwe was / at thilke tyme as there
Of swiche feet' as my lengthe parted were 8
In sixe feet' equal / of proporcion
Ther with / the Moones exaltacion
I meene Libra / alwey gan ascende
As we / were entryng' at a Thropes ende 12
¶ ffor which our hoost' as he was wont to gye
As in this caas / oure Ioly compaignye
Seyde in this wise / lordynges euerichoon
Now lakketh vs no tales / mo than oon 16
ffulfilled is my sentence / and my decree
I trowe / that we han herd of ech degree
Almost' fulfild is al myn ordinaunce
I pray to god / so yeue hym right good chaunce 20
That telleth this tale / to vs lustily
¶ Sire preest quod he / artow a vicary
Or arte a person / sey sooth by thy fey
¶e what thou be / ne breke thou nat oure play 24

ffor euery man saue thou / hath toold his tale	25
Vnbokele / and shewe vs what is in thy Male	
ffor trewely / me thynketh by thy cheere	
Thou sholdest knytte vp wel a greet mateere	28
Telle vs a fable anon / for Cokkes bones	
¶ This Person answerde / al atones	
Thou getest fable noon / ytoold for me	
ffor Paul / that writeth vn-to Thymothee	¶ Paulus ad Thimotheum.
Repreueth hem / that weyueth soothfastnesse	
And tellen fables / and swich wrecchednesse	
Why sholde I sowen / draf out of my fest	
Whan I may sowen whete / if þat me lest	36
ffor which I seye / if that yow list to heere	
Moralitee / and vertuons mateere	
And thanne / þat ye wol yeue me Audience	
I wol fayn / at Cristes reuerence	40
Do yow plesaunce / leefful as I kan	
But trusteth wel / I am a Southren man	
I kan nat geeste / Rum / Ram / Ruf / by lettre	
Ne god woot rym holde I but litel better	44
And therefore / if yow list I wol nat glose	
I wol yow telle / a myrie tale in prose	
To knytte vp at this feeste / and make an ende	
And Ihesu for his grace / wit me sende	48
To shewe yow the way / in this viage	[leaf 210, back]
Of thilke parfit / glorious pilgrymage	
That highte / Ierusalem celestial	
And if ye vouche sauf / anon I shal	52
Bigynne vp-on my tale / for which I preye	
Telle youre ays / I kan no better seye	
¶ But natheles / this meditacioñ	
I putte it ay / vnder correccioñ	56
Of Clerkes / for I am nat textueel	
I take but sentence / trusteth weel	
Therefore / I make a protestacioñ	
That I wol stonde to correccioñ	60

¶ Vp on this word / we han assented soone	61
ffor as vs semed / it was for to doone	
To enden / in som <i>vertuous</i> sentence	
And for to yeue hym space and audience	64
And bede oure hoost ^t he sholde to hym seye	
That alle we / to telle his tale hym preye	
¶ Oure hoost ^t hadde the wordes for vs alle	
Sire preest quod he / now faire yow bifalle	68
Sey what yow list ^t and we wol gladly heere	
And with that word / he seyde in this manere	
Telleth quod he / youre <i>meditacioun</i>	
But hasteth yow / the sonne wole adoun	72
Beth fructuous / and that in litel space	
And to do wel / god sende yow his grace	74

¶ Explicit/ prohemium 

THE PARSON'S TALE.

A TREATISE ON PENITENCE, IN 3 PARTS :

- Part I. On **Penitence**, and its 1st requisite **Contrition (A)** (p. 593—612).
 Part II. On its 2nd requisite, **Confession (B)** (p. 612—679).
 Part III. On its 3rd requisite, **Satisfaction (C)** (p. 679—684), with the Writer's Leave-taking and Retractations (p. 684-85).

PART I. (p. 593—612).

ON PENITENCE, AND ITS 1ST REQUISITE, CONTRITION.

Proem on Jeremiah vi. 16. The Tale is to be on *Penitence* as a full noble way to lead folk to Christ, and is to treat of

- i. 'what is Penitence' (p. 594).
- ii. 'whennes it is cleped Penitence'. [*not in the Tale.*]
- iii. 'in how manye maneres been the acciouns or werkynge of Penitence' (p. 594-5).
- iv. 'how many speses ther been of Penitence' (p. 595).
- v. 'whiche thynges apertenen and bihouen to Penitence' (p. 595--682: nearly all Parts I and III, and all Part II).
- vi. 'whiche thynges destourben Penitence' (at end of Part III, p. 682) (p. 593).
- i. **Penitence** defined, by *a.* St Ambrose; *b.* 'som doctour'; *c.* the writer. Its requisites: 1. bewailing of sins; 2. purpose to have shrift, to do satisfaction, never to sin again, to continue in good works (p. 594).

[*ii. not given.*]

- iii. The 3 actions of Penitence: 1. Baptism after sin; 2. not to do deadly sin after baptism; 3. not thus to do venial sin (p. 594-95).
- iv. The 3 speses or kinds of Penitence: 1. Solemn (to be put out of church, or do open penance); 2. Common (to go naked on pilgrimage); 3. Private (p. 595).
- v. The 3 necessities or requisites for Penitence (p. 596—682):
 - A. **Contrition of heart** (p. 596—612).
 - B. **Confession of mouth** (Part II, p. 612—679).
 - C. **Satisfaction** (Part III, p. 679—682).

Penitence avails against 3 things, by which we wrath Christ (p. 595).

- A. **Contrition** is the root of Penitence, whose stem bears branches and leaves of Confession, and fruit of Satisfaction.

Contrition also bears a seed of grace, whose heat draws men to God. (Simile of the child and his nurse's milk.)

Penance is the tree of life (p. 596).

Four Points to be known about Contrition:

1. What it is; 2. the causes that move a man to it; 3. how to be contrite; 4. what it avails the soul (p. 597).
2. The 6 Causes that should move a man to Contrition:
 - a.* Remembrance of Sins (p. 597-8).
 - b.* Whoso does sin is the Thrall of Sin (p. 598-99).
 - c.* Dread of the Day of Doom and the Pains of Hell (p. 599—604). These described: the Doom (p. 599-600); Job's 'fond of mysese and of derknesse' (p. 600-1); the 3 shames in hell against (1) 'Honours, (2) delices, and (3) riches' (p. 611); poverty in 4 things: no treasure, food, clothing, or friends (p. 602); and no delights of the 5 senses. The pain shall be eternal (p. 603). Hell is orderless (p. 603-4). The 7 causes why the damnd have lost all hope (p. 604).
 - d.* Remembrance of the good works we've left undone, and the loss of the good works done while we were in sin (p. 604-6). Deadly sin wipes out all good works formerly done (p. 605); and no good works can be done in deadly sin (p. 605-6). The new French song, *J'ai tout perdu mon temps* (also quoted in Chaucer's late poem of *Fortune*).

- e. Remembrance of Christ's suffering for our sins (p. 606). In man's sin, every ordinance is turned up-so-down (p. 607). For this disorder Christ sufferd (p. 608).
- f. The hope of 3 things: 1. Forgiveness of Sins, 2. the Gift of Grace to do well, 3. the Glory of Heaven (p. 609).
3. How to be contrite. Contrition must be universal and total: for sins of thought, for desires against God's law, for wicked words as well as wicked deeds (p. 610). Contrition must be angwishous and continual (p. 609-11).
4. How Contrition helps the soul. It sometimes delivers a man from sin; destroys the prison of hell; cleanses the soul; changes the son of Wrath to the son of Grace (p. 611-12).

PART II (*no. v. continued*).**B. CONFESSION (THE 2ND REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE)**
(p. 612—679).

- B. Confession.** § 1. (l. 317) 'what is confession' (p. 612).
 § 2. 'whether it oghte nedes be doon or noon' (p. 672-9).
 § 3. 'whiche thynges been couenable to verry Confession' (p. 674-79).

CONFESSION, § 1.

1. 'Confession is verry shewynge of synnes to the preest' (l. 318) (p. 612). We must understand too
 a. (l. 321) 'whennes that synnes spryngen' (p. 612—15).
 b. 'how they encreessen' (p. 615-16; 672-74).
 c. 'whiche they been' (p. 616—672).
- 1.a. Sin sprang from the fall of Adam (p. 612). The legend of Adam and Eve told (p. 613). From Adam we took Original Sin, and were born sons of eternal damnation; but Baptism rescues us; though we keep liability to temptation, or Concupiscence (p. 613-14).
- Concupiscence*, or the nourishing and occasion of sin. St Paul and St Jerome's temptations (p. 614-15).
- 1.b. How Sin grows in a man. 1. by Concupiscence; 2. Subjection to the Devil; 3. Hesitation; 4. Doing, the Sin becoming Actual (p. 615-16).
- 1.c. Sin is *a.* venial, *β.* deadly (or mortal).
 a. 1. Venial Sin defined. It skips into Deadly Sin. (Simile of the drops of water into a vessel's hold drowning the ship;) (p. 616).
 β. 1. Deadly Sin defined (p. 617).
 a. 2. Of divers small venial sins, hardly thought sins (p. 617-18); eating, drinking, talking, too much; using your wife too much; not visiting the sick (p. 617); talking vanities at church, &c. (p. 618). Cure of venial sins by love to Christ, prayer, confession, good works, receiving the Sacrament, holy-water, &c. (p. 618).
- 1.c. β. 2. *The Seven Deadly Sins.* The Chieftains, head and spring, of all other Sins (p. 619).
 i. Pride (p. 619-26), and its Remedy (p. 626-8).
 ii. Envy (p. 628-30), and its Remedy (p. 630-1).
 iii. Ire or Anger (p. 631-42), and its Remedy (p. 642-5).
 iv. Accidie or Sloth (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), and its Remedy (p. 650-1).
 v. Avarice or Covetousness (p. 651-7), and its Remedy (p. 657-8).
 vi. Gluttony (p. 658-9), and its Remedy (p. 660).
 vii. Lechery (p. 660-8), and its Remedy (p. 668-72).
- i. **PRIDE** (p. 619—626). Its 16 (and more) Twigs. 1. Disobediencce, 2. Boasting, 3. Hypocrisy, 4. Despite, 5. Arrogance (p. 619), 6. Impudence, 7. Swelling of Heart (rejoicing in harm done), 8. Insolence, 9. Elation, 10. Impatience, 11. Contumacy, 12.

- Presumption, 13. Irreverence, 14. Pertinacity, 15. Vain-glory, 16. Jangling (chattering).
- A private kind of pride (the Host's Wife's and Wife of Bath's¹), wanting to go to offering first, &c. (p. 620).
- Two kinds of Pride, *a.* 'within man's heart', *b.* without; *b.* being the sign of *a.*, 'as the gaye leefsel atte Taverne is sign of the wyn that is in the Celer'² (p. 620-21), *b.* outside pride.
- a.* in dear clothing, 1. superfluity of it: its cost, furring, chisel-holes, dragging in the dung, waste of material (p. 621), unfitness for giving to the poor: 2. scantness of it: showing men's privy members, and buttocks (like a she-ape's rump), and the former as half-flayd, in parti-colourd hose³. The 'outrageous array of Women' (p. 623).
- β.* in horses (p. 623), and vicious grooms to tend 'em; plate-harness, &c.
- γ.* in household: keeping too many retainers or servants, who oppress the poor (p. 624).
- δ.* in table: not asking the poor to feasts; having burning and ornamented dishes⁴; too costly cups, &c., and too choice minstrelsy (p. 624).
- What Pride sins are deadly, and what venial (p. 624).
- The Sources of Pride (p. 624): goods of Nature, Fortune, Grace (p. 624). The Folly of Pride in any of these goods of Nature: 'we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and . . . of o nature'⁵. The general signs of *Gentleness*. (The flies calld 'bees', and their stingless king) (p. 625); 3 gifts of Grace; 3 of Fortune. The brittleness of popular praise⁶ (p. 626).
- The Remedy against Pride.*
- Humility or Meekness, and its 3 kinds: in 1. heart, 2. mouth, 3. works. 4 kinds of each of these (p. 626-27).
- ii. ENVY (p. 627-30): defined by the Philosopher and St Augustine. It springs from Malice (p. 627).
- Malice; 2 kinds of: 1. hardness of heart, or recklessness; 2. opposing truth (p. 627).
- The 2 kinds of Envy (p. 628): 1. sorrow at other men's prosperity; 2. joy at other men's harm: whence comes
- Backbiting; 5 kinds (p. 628): 1. praise with a *but* at the end; 2. turning well-meant things upside down to ill ones; 3. lessening a neighbour's goodness; 4. putting one man above another; 5. glad listening to scandal (p. 628).
- Grudging or murmuring (p. 628): 1. against God (p. 629); 2. Murmuring from avarice, 3. from pride, 4. from envy; 5. among Servants, who say 'the Devil's *Paternoster*'; 6. Murmuring from ire or hate: thence, *a.* Bitterness of Heart, *b.* Discord, *c.* Scorning; *d.* Accusing (p. 629); *e.* Malignity (p. 630).
- The Remedy against Envy* (p. 630-31).
- Love of God and one's neighbour. How a man shall love his neighbour. How an enemy is included in the name 'neighbour' (p. 630). 3 Remedies of Love, against 3 deeds of Hate (p. 631). Love is the medicine that casts out the venom of Envy from man's heart (p. 631).
- iii. IRE OR ANGER (p. 631-42), and its 2 kinds: *a.* good Ire or Wrath (p. 632); *b.* wicked Ire, and its 2 kinds: sudden ire, and ire of malice aforethought (p. 632-33).
- Three Shrews that forge in the Devil's furnace: Pride, Envy, and Contumely (p. 633).

¹ Melibe-Monk Link, B. § 11; and General Prologue, A.

² Chaucer's father no doubt had a sign outside his wine-shop or tavern in Thames Street, London.

³ The outspoken and somewhat coarse abuse of the new fashions in dress is a great change from Chaucer's admirable Third-Period chaff of the moral short-comings of the monks and friars, &c., in the Prologue and middle Tales. If this is not change of man, it's change of mood.

⁴ Chaucer must have seen plenty of these when he was page, valet, and squire.

⁵ Compare Chaucer's *Gentleness*, &c. ⁶ Compare Clerk's Tale, Part VI, st. 135.

Wrath takes away a man's wit and spiritual life (p. 634).

Fruits of Wrath: 1. Hate. 2. War and wrong. 3. Manslaughter, *a.* spiritual; *b.* bodily (p. 634).

a. The 3 kinds of spiritual Manslaughter (3, calld 6 in MSS. p. 634): 1. by Hate. 2. by Backbiting. 3. Giving wicked Counsel, by Fraud (p. 634).

b. bodily Manslaughter: slaying with your tongue, giving orders or counsel to slay a man (p. 634).

Manslaughter in deed: its 4 (that is, 7) kinds (p. 635): 1. by law: a Justice condemning a man to death; 2. justifiable homicide, in defence of one's own life; 3. by misadventure: shooting an arrow, &c.; 4. a woman overlying her child; 5. a man making a woman barren by drinks, &c., killing the foetus within her, shedding his seed in the wrong place; a woman killing the child in her womb; 6. a woman killing her child (after birth) for shame; 7. a man by lechery or blows killing a foetus.

(Sixteen) other sins coming from Ire or Anger.

1. blaming or despising God, as hazarders do (Cp. *Pardoner's Tale*) (p. 635); and those who treat of the Sacrament of the altar irreverently (p. 636).

2. Attry anger: making angry false excuses for sin.

3. Swearing, which dismembers Christ (p. 636).

a. Of lawful Swearing, before a Judge: its 3 conditions, and its motives; *b.* God's name and Christ's, not to be taken in vain (p. 637); *c.* swearing for gentility or manliness (p. 638); *d.* swearing suddenly; *e.* of Adjuration and Conjuraton by enchanters and necromancers; *f.* of Divination by Dreams, &c.; *g.* of Charms for Wounds and Maladies (p. 638).

4. Lying (p. 638), and its 6 kinds.

5. Flattering. How Flatterers are the Devil's Nurses, his Enchanters and Chaplains (p. 639).

6. Cursing that comes of irous heart: Malison.

7. Chiding and Reproach (p. 640); (specially a chiding wife¹) (p. 640-41).

8. Scorning (p. 641).

9. Giving wicked Counsel (p. 641).

10. Sowing and making Discord (p. 642).

11. Double tongue (p. 642).

12. Betraying of Counsel (p. 642).

13. Menace.

14. Idle words.

15. Jangling (chattering) (p. 642).

16. Japing (joking) (p. 642-43).

The Remedy against Anger (p. 643-5). Debonairtee and Patience (p. 643). Four kinds of grievances, and their remedies: 1. wicked words, 2. loss of goods, 3. harm of body, 4. outrageous labour (p. 644).

Incentives to Patience. Story of the Philosopher and Child (p. 644-45). Obedience comes from Patience (p. 645).

iv. ACCIDIE, or SLOTH (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), is an enemy to the 3 states of man,—1. innocence (p. 645), 2. prayer (p. 646), 3. grace;—and to one's livelihood. Its 12 bad consequences (p. 646): 1. Sloth (and its remedy); 2. Dread to begin good works (p. 646); 3. Wanhope, or Despair (and its Remedy) (p. 647); 4. Somnolence (p. 648), and 5. Negligence, or 6. Recklessness, and the Remedy for each; 7. Idleness; 8. *Tarditas*, or tarrying before turning to God (p. 649); 9. *Lachesse*, or giving up a good work begun; 10. Coldness; 11. Undevotion; 12. Worldly sorrow (p. 649).

The Remedy against Accidie (p. 650-51): Fortitude or Strength, and its 5 kinds. 1. Magnanimity² or great Courage; 2. Faith or Hope; 3. Assurance; 4. Magnificence; 5. Constancy (p. 651).

¹ Does Chaucer here refer to his former wife?

² Miswritten 'Magnificence' in Ellesmere and Lansdowne MSS.

v. **AVARICE** (p. 651-57). The difference between Avarice and Covetousness (p. 651); and between an Idolater and an avaricious man (p. 652). Of Covetousness, and lords' extortion from their bondmen: "humble folk been Cristes freendes" (p. 652-53). The Duty of lords to their thralls or churls. Of those that pillage Holy Church (p. 653-54); lords who plunder the poor are like wolves (p. 654). Of Deceit between Merchant and Merchant (p. 654). Of honest bodily Merchandise (the surplus of one country may be sent to help another) (p. 654). Of spiritual Merchandise, or Simony, and its 2 kinds (p. 655),—thieves that steal Christ's souls get livings (p. 655-56);—Hasardry or Games of Chance (p. 656). Other outcomes of Avarice (p. 656): 1. Lying, 2. Theft (bodily and spiritual) (p. 656-57), 3. False Witness, 4. False Oaths (p. 657).

The Remedy against Avarice (p. 657): Mercy and Pity, and reasonable Liberality (p. 658). Of foolish largess (p. 658).

vi. **GLUTTONY** (p. 658-59), and its 5 kinds (p. 659): 1. Drunkenness, or the burial of man's reason; 2. a troubled spirit; 3. bad way of eating; 4. distemperd bodily humours; 5. forgetfulness. Or, as St Gregory says, 1. eating too soon; 2. eating too delicate food; 3. taking too much; 4. troubling too much about cooking food; 5. eating greedily: these are the 5 fingers of the devil's hand (p. 659).

The Remedy against Gluttony (p. 660): Abstinence, and its fellows. Temperance, Shame, Content with plain food, Moderation, Sobriety, Sparing (p. 660).

vii. **LECHERY** (p. 660). Its punishment in the Old Testament (p. 660). Adultery, and the desire of it (p. 661-62).

The 5 fingers of the Devil's other hand (p. 662); 1. foolish looking; 2. villainous touching; 3. foul words; 4. kissing (old dotards, and dry dogs at a rose-tree (p. 662); and how a man should love his wife); 5. the stinking deed of lechery (p. 663). Its kinds: 1. Fornication. Taking a maid's maidenhead, or 100th fruit (p. 663). 2. Adultery, defined. 3. Harms following from it: *a.* breaking of faith; *b.* theft (of the wife's body from her husband (Joseph and Potiphar's wife), and of her soul from Christ); *c.* breaking God's commandment, and defouling Christ (p. 664). Of Harlots and Bawds (p. 665). Adultery is set between Theft and Manslaughter. More kinds of Adultery: 1. by Men bound by Religious Vows, &c.; 2. those in Holy Orders (p. 665). Lecherous Priests are like a free Bull in a town, and they eat raw flesh of folk's wives and daughters (p. 666); 3. by man and wife copulating for pleasure only (p. 667); 4. copulation with kinsfolk, spiritual (or godchildren) or fleshly (blood relations). 5. the abominable unmentionable sin; 6. Pollution, of 3 kinds: 1. too rank humours; 2. weakness (p. 667); 3. evil thoughts (p. 668).

The Remedy for Lechery (p. 668): I. Chastity and Continenence.

1. in Marriage. (The true effect of Marriage. One husband to have one wife (p. 668). How a man should behave to his wife (p. 669). How the wife should be subject to her husband (p. 669), and be moderate in behaviour, discreet in words, &c. (p. 669-70). The 3 causes for which man and wife may copulate (p. 670): *a.* begetting of children; *b.* to pay the mutual debt of their bodies; *c.* to avoid lechery (p. 670). The 4th cause, pleasure, is deadly sin (p. 670-71).)

2. In Widowhood; 3. Virginity (p. 671).

II. Special avoidance of causes of lechery: *a.* eating and drinking; long sleeping; *b.* the person who'd tempt you (p. 671-72). (I wish I could tell you the Ten Commandments; but it's too high doctrine (p. 672).) [End of *Confession*, § 1, *c.*]

Sin is in heart, mouth, deed, by the 5 Wits (p. 672).

§ 1. *b.* (see p. 615-16.) The 7 Circumstances that encrease or aggravate sins (p. 672). 1. the person who sins (male or female, &c.); 2. the kind of sin (fornication or homicide); 3. the place it was committed in (as in a church, by a priest) (p. 673); 4. for what motive; 5. the number of times it was committed; 6. by what temptation; 7. how it was committed; and all other circumstances (p. 674).

CONFESSION, § 2, § 3 (p. 674-79).

Profitable Confession, and its 4 (= 3) Conditions (p. 674):

1. sorrowful bitterness of heart (p. 674); its 5 signs: *a.* shamefastness (like the Publican's) (p. 675); *b.* humility; *c.* fulness of tears (p. 675); *d.* no hesitation (like the Magdalen) for shame; *e.* obedience to receive penance laid on you (p. 675).
2. speedy Confession (p. 676); its 4 Conditions: *f.* that it be well thought over; *g.* the greatness and number of sins must be understood; *h.* the sinner must be contrite, and *i.* avoid occasions of sins.
3. Shrift must be made to one man, not more (p. 676).

True Shrift, and its 10 Conditions (p. 677): 1. that it be of free will; 2. that it be lawful (both sinner and priest, Popish); 3. that it be not despairing of Christ's mercy; 4. that a man accuse himself only, and not another; 5. that it be not lying (accusing oneself of sins never committed) (p. 678); that it be by one's own mouth, and not by letter; 7. that the sin be not painted with fair words; 8. that the shrift be to a discreet priest; 9. that the shrift be not made for vain-glory, but for fear of Christ; 10. that the shrift be not made suddenly, for a joke (p. 678). You may be shriven more than once for the same sin; and should be houseled once a year (p. 679).

PART III (*no. v. continued, and no. vi.*).

SATISFACTION (THE 3RD REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE)
(p. 679—684).

In *a.* Alms. *β.* bodily punishment.

a. Alms and its three kinds (p. 679): 1. Contrition of heart. 2. Pity for one's neighbour's faults. 3. Giving good counsel to other's souls and bodies (food, visits in prison, burial). These Alms should be done privily, if possible (p. 680).

β. Bodily Punishment (Penance), of 4 kinds: 1. Prayers (chiefly of the Paternoster, whose expounding I leave to Masters of Theology) (p. 680). 2. Watching, and its 3 kinds: forbearing, *a.* meat and drink, *b.* worldly jollity, and *c.* deadly sin (p. 681). 3. Fasting, and its 4 kinds: Liberality to poor folk; spiritual gladness of heart; not grudging at fasting; reasonable eating. 4. Virtuous teachings, or Discipline: *a.* by word, writing, or example; *b.* by wearing hairshirts, &c, next your skin, scourging yourself, taking evils and injuries patiently (p. 682). [End of no. v. in Part i; p. 593.]

vi. The 4 Things that disturb Penance [no. vi, or last §, of p. 593 at foot] (p. 682). 1. Dread, and its remedy. 2. Shame, and its remedy. 3. Hope: *a.* of long life, and *b.* consequent overconfidence in Christ's mercy (p. 683). 4. Wanhope, or Despair of Mercy; its 3 kinds: *x.* from great and long continued sin; *y.* from falls-back into sin; *z.* from not being able to persevere in goodness (p. 683).

The fruit of Penance (p. 683-4).

EPILOGUE.

The Author's Leave-taking, and Lament over, and Withdrawal of, his Sinful Books, &c. (p. 684-85).

[*Ellesmere MS, leaf 210, back.*]

[*There are no paragraph-breaks in the MS, but Tyrwhitt's are kept in the print for convenience sake.*]

¶ Heere bigynneth / the Persouns tale 𐀀

¶ Ier. 6°. State super vias & videte & interrogate de viis antiquis / que sit via bona / & ambulate in ea & inuenietis refrigerium animabus vestris &c 𐀀 𐀀

Oure sweete lord god of heuene / that no man wole perisse / but wole that we comen alle to the knoweleche of hym / and the blissful lif / that is perdurable /. [76] amonesteth vs by the prophete Ieremie / and seith in this wyse / [77] ¶ Stondeth vpon the weyes / and seeth / and axeth of olde pathes / that is to seyn / of olde sentences / which is the goode wey / [78] and walketh in that wey / and ye shal fynde refresshyng for youre soules &c [79] ¶ Manye been the weyes espiituels that leden folk / to oure Lord Ihesu Crist. and to the regne of glorie / [80] Of whiche weyes / ther is a ful noble wey / and a couenable / which may nat fayle ¹to no man / ne to womman / that thurgh synne hath myssoon fro the righte wey of Ierusalem celestial / [81] and this wey / is cleped Penitence / of which man sholde gladly herknen and enquere with al his herte / [82] to wyten what is Penitence / and whennes it is cleped Penitence / and in how manye maneres been the accioñs or werkynges of Penitence / [83] and how manye speces / ther been of Penitence / and whiche thynges apertenen and bihouen to Penitence / and whiche thynges / destourben Penitence /

[75]

¶ Nota de penitence

¶ What
Penitence is

[84] ¶ Seint Ambrose seith / that Penitence / is the
pleynynge of man / for gilt þat he hath doon / and na-
moore to do any thyng^t for which hym ogh^te to pleyne /
[85] ¶ And som doctour seith / Penitence is the wayment-
ynge of man / that sorweth for his synne / and pyneth
hym self for he hath mysdoon [86] ¶ Penitence / with
certeyne circumstances / is ver^ray repentance of a man that
halt hym self in sorwe / and oother peyne for hise giltes /
[87] And for he shal be ver^ray penitent. he shal first
biwaylen the synnes that he hath doon and stidefastly
purposen in his herte / to haue shrift^t of mouthe / and to
doon satisfacciōn [88] and neuere to doon thyng^t. for which
hym ogh^te moore biwayle / or to compleyne / and con-
tinue in goode werkes / or elles his repentance may nat
auaille /. [89] ffor as seith seint Ysidre ¶ he is a Iaper^t and
a gabber^t / and no ver^ray repentant. that eftsoone dooth
thyng^t. for which hym ogh^te repente /. [90] Wepynge /
and nat for to stynt to synne / may nat auaylle [91] ¶ But
nathelees / men shal hope /. that euery tyme þat man
falleth / be it neuer so ofte / þat he may arise thurgh Peni-
tence / if he haue grace /. but^t certainly it is greet doute ||
[92] ffor as seith Seint Gregorie / vnnethe ariseth he out
of synne / that is charged with the charge of yuel vsage /
[93] And therefore / repentant folk / þat stynte for to
synne / and forlete synne / er þat synne forlete hem / hooly
chirche / holdeth hem siker of hire sauaciōn /. [94] And
he that synneth / and ver^railly repenteth hym in his laste /.
hooly chirche yet hopeth his sauaciōn / by the grete
mercy / of oure lord Ihesu Crist^t for his repentañce but
taak the siker wey /

¶ Nota

¶ Nota secundum
sanctum
Gregorium

[95] ¶ And now / sith I haue declared yow / what
thyng is penitence. / now shul ye vnderstonde / that ther
been .iij. acciōns of Penitence / [96] ¶ The firste acciōn of
Penitence is / that a man be baptized after that he hath
synned ||. [97] Seint Augustyn seith || but he be peny^tent^t
for his olde synful lyf. he may nat bigynne / the newe

¶ The firste
accioun of
penitence

¶ Nota secundum
sanctum
Augustinum

clene lif^t /. [98] for *certes* / if he be baptized / withouten
penitence of his olde gilt^t he receyueþ the mark^t of
baptisme / but nat the *grace* / ne the remission of his
synnes / til he haue repentance *verray* / [99] ¶ Another ¶ The .iiij^{de}.
defaute is this that men doon deedly synne / after þat acciozn of
they han receyued baptisme [100] ¶ The thridde defaute ¶ The .iiij^{de}.
is / that men fallen in venial synnes after hir baptisme / acciozn of
fro day to day [101] ¶ Ther of seith Seint Augustyn ¶ Augustinus
¶ That penitence / of goode and humble folk /. is the
penitence of euery day /

[102] The ^{species} species of Penitence / been .iiij. ¶ That oon ¶ Of .iiij. spes
of hem / is solempne ¶ Another^s is *commune* ¶ and the of penaunce
thridde is *priuee* [103] ¶ Thilke penaunce that is so- ¶ Of penaunce
lempne is in two maneres /. As to be put out of hooly solempne
chirche in lente for slaughtre of children / and swich
maner thyng^t [104] ¶ Another thyng^t is / Whan a man
hath synned openly / of which synne / the fame is openly
spoken in the contree / and thanne hooly chirche by Iugge-
ment^t destreyneth hym / for to do open penaunce / [105]
¶ *Commune* penaunce is / that preestes enioynen men in ¶ Of *commune*
certeyn caas / as for to goon *perauen^tture* / naked in penaunce
pilgrimages / or bare foot^t [106] ¶ *Priuee* penaunce is ¶ Of *priuee*
thilke / that^t men doon alday for *priuee* synnes / of whiche penaunce
they shryue hem *priuely* and receyue *priuee* penaunce

[107] Now shaltow vnderstande / what is bihouely ¶ What is
and necessarie / to *verray* *perfit* penitence /. And this bihouely to *perfit*
stant on .iiij. thynges ||. [108] *Contriciozn* of herte ||. *Con-*
fessioñ of Mouth ¶ and *Satisfaccioñ* /. [109] ffor which /
seith Seint Iohn Crisostom ¶ Penitence destreyneth a man ¶ *Iohannes*
to accepte benygneþ euery peyne that hym is enioyned / *Crisostonius*
with *Contricioñ* of herte and shrift^t of mouth / with *satis-*
faccioñ / and in werkyng of alle manere humylitee / [110]
and this is fruytful penitence agayn .iiij. thynges in whiche ¶ Of *iii* thynges
we wratthe oure lord Ihesu Crist ||. [111] This is to seyn / in whiche we
by delit^t in thynkyng ¶ by reccheleesnesse in spekyng ||. wratthe oure lord
and by wikked synful werkyng || [112] And agayns thise Ihesu crist /

¶ How penaunce
may be likned to
a tree.

wikkede giltes is Penitence that may be likned vn-to a tree /

[113] The roote of this tree / is Contricion / that hideth
hym in the herte / of hym þat is verray repentaunt. right as
the roote of a tree hydeth hym in the erthe [114] ¶ Of the
roote of Contricion spryngeth a stalke that bereth braunches
and leues of Confession / and fruyt of satisfaccio[n] [115]

¶ dominus in
Euangelio.

¶ ffor which Crist seith in his gospel /. dooth digne fruyt of
Penitence /. for by this fruyt may men knowe this
tree / and nat by the roote / that is hyd / in the herte
of man / ne by the braunches / ne by the leues of Confession
[116] And therefore / oure Lord Ihesu Crist / seith thus /. by

¶ Of a seed þat
spryngeþ of
Contricion

the fruyt of hem / ye shul knowen hem [117] ¶ Of this
roote eek' spryngeth a seed a grace / the which seed / is
mooder of sikernesse / and this seed / is egre and hoot
[118] the grace of this seed / spryngeth of god thurgh rem-
embrance of the day of doome / and on the peynes of
helle [119] ¶ Of this matere seith Salomon That in the

¶ Salomoun

¶ Of the heete of
this seede

drede of god / man foreteth his synne [120] ¶ The heete
of this seed / is the loue of god / and the desiryng of the
ioye perdurable [121] This heete / draweth the herte of a
man to god / and dooth hym haten his synne / [122] for
soothly / ther is no thyng that sauoureth so wel to a child
as the Milk of his Norice / ne no thyng moore abhom-
ynable than thilke Milk when it is medled with
oother mete [123] Right so the synful man that loueth
his synne / hym semeth / that it is to him moost sweete of
any thyng. [124] but fro that tyme / that he loueth sadly
oure lord Ihesu crist. and desireth the lif perdurable / ther
nys to him no thyng moore abhomynable / [125] for
soothly / the lawe of god / is the loue of god / for which /

¶ Nota
exemplum.

¶ dauid propheta

Dauid the prophete seith ¶ I. haue loued thy lawe & hated
wikkednesse and hate / he that loued god / kepeth his lawe
and his word [126] ¶ This tree saugh the prophete Daniel /
in the Auysion of the kyng / Nabugodonosor / whan he con-
seiled hym to do penitence [127] ¶ Penaunce / is the tree
of lyf / to hem that it receyuen / and he þat holdeth hym

in verray penitence / is blessed / after the sentence of Salomon

[128] ¶ In this penitence or contricioñ / man shal vn- ¶ Of .iiij. thynges /
derstonde .iiij. thynges / that is to seyn / what is Contricioñ / longynge to
and whiche been the causes þat moeuen a man to con- contricioñ
tricioñ /. and how he sholde be contrit. / & what con-
tricioñ / auailleth to the Soule [129] ¶ Thanne is it thus / ¶ What
þat contricioñ / is the verray sorwe / that a man receyueth contricioñ is.
in his herte for his synnes / with sad purpos / to shryue
hym / and to do penaunce / and neueremoore to do synne /
[130] and this sorwe / shal been in this manere as seith
seint Bernard ¶ It shal been heuy and greuous / and ¹ful ¶ Sanctus
sharpe and poynañt in herte [131] ¶ first / for man hath Bernardus
agilt his lord / & his Creatour / and moore sharpe and
poynañt. for he hath agilt hys fader celestial /. [132] and
yet moore sharpe and poynañt. for he hath wrathed and
agilt hym that boghte hym /. which with his precious blood
hæp deliuered vs / fro the bondes of synne / and fro the
crueltee of the deuel and fro the peynes of helle

[133] ¶ The causes that oghte moeue a man to Con- ¶ Of .vj. causes
tricioñ / been .vj. / ¶ first a man shal remembre hym of þat oghten
hise synnes / [134] but looke he / that thilke remem- moeue a man to
brañce. ne be to hym no delit by no wey / but greet shame contricioñ
and sorwe for his gilt ¶ ffor Iob seith / synful men / doon ¶ The firste cause
werkes / worthy of Confessioñ [135] And therefore seith of contricioñ
Ezechie /. I. wol remembre me / alle the yeres of my lyf ¶ Iob
in bitternesse of myn herte [136] And god seith in the ¶ Ezechias
Apocalipse ¶ Remembreth yow / fro whennes þat ye been ¶ dominus in
falle /. for biforn that tyme þat ye synned / ye were the Apocalipse
children of god /. and lymes of the regne of god / [137] but
for youre synne / ye been woxen thral and foul / and
membres of the feend / hate of Aungels / sclaudre of hooly
chirche / and foode of the false serpent. perpetuel matere
of the fir of helle /. [138] And yet moore foul and abhom-
ynable / for ye trespassen so ofte tyme / as dooth the hound /
þat retourneth to eten his spewyng /. [139] and yet

be ye fouler / for youre longe continuyng^t in synne &
 youre synful vsage / for which / ye be roten in youre
 synne / as a beest in his dong^t [140] ¶ Swiche manere of
 thoghtes / maken a man / to haue shame of his synne /
 and no delit. as god seith / by the prophete Ezechiel ||.
 [141] ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes / and they
 shuln displese yow /. soothly synnes been the weyes / that
 leden folk to helle

¶ *dominus per*
Ezechielem pro-
phetam

¶ The .ij. de cause
 of contricioun

¶ [142] The seconde cause that oghte make a man /
 to haue desdeyn of synne is this /. That as seith seint

¶ *sanctus Petrus*

Peter /. who so that dooth synne / is thral of synne /. And
 synne / put a man in greet thraldom ||. [143] And ther-

¶ *Ezechiel*
propheta

fore seith the prophete Ezechiel /. I. wente sorweful / in
 desdayn of my self/. And certes / wel oghte a man /

¶ *Seneca*

haue desdayn of synne / and withdrawe hym / from that
 thraldom and vileynye /. [144] and lo / what seith Seneca

in this matere ||. He seith thus /. though I wiste / that god /
 neither god ne man / ne sholde neuere knowe it/. yet

wolde I haue desdayn / for to do synne [145] ¶ And the

¶ *Idem Seneca*

same Seneca also seith /. I. am born to gretter thynges /
 than to be thral to my body / or than for to maken / of my

body a thral / [146] ne a fouler thral / may no man ne
 womman maken of his body / than for to yeuen his body

to synne /. [147] al were it the fouleste cherl / or the
 fouleste womman that lyueth / and leest of value / yet is he

thanne moore foule / & moore in seruitute /. [148] euere /
 fro the hyer degree that man falleth /. the moore is he

thral / and moore / to god and to the world abhomyn-
 able / [149] ¶ O goode god / wel oghte man haue desdayn

of synne / sith that thurgh synne / ther he was free /
 now is he makend bonde [150] ¶ And therefore / seyth Seint

¶ *Sanctus*
Augustinus

Augustyn /. If thou hast desdayn of thy seruant. if he
 agilte / or synne /. haue thou thanne desdayn / that thou

thy self / sholdest do synne /. [151] take reward of thy
 value / that thou ne be / to foul to thy self [152]

¶ Allas wel oghten they thanne haue desdayn to been

seruauntz & thralles to synne / and soore been ashamed
of hem self. [153] that god / of his endeles goodnesse /
hath set hem in heigh estaat /. or yeuen hem wit / strengthe
of body / heele / beautee / prosperitee / [154] and
boghte hem fro ¹the deeth / with his herte blood / that
they so vnkyndely / agayns his gentillesse / quiten hym so
vileynsly / to slaughtre of hir owene soules / [155] ¶ O
goode god / ye women / that been of so gret beautee /
remembreth yow / of the prouerbe of Salomon ¶ he seith /
[156] likneth a fair womman / that is a fool of hire body /
lyk to a ryng^r of gold^r / that were in the groyn of a soughe
[157] ffor right^r as a soughe / wroteth in euerich ordure / so
wroteth hire beautee in the stynkyng ordure of synne

¶ Notate vos
mulieres & caute
¶ Salomon

[158] ¶ The thridde cause / that oghite moeue a man
to Contricioñ / is drede of the day of doome / and of the
horrible peynes of helle [159] ¶ ffor as seint Ierome seith ||.
At euery tyme / þat me remembreth of the day of doome .I.
quake /. [160] for whan I ete or drynke / or what so that I
do / euere semeth me / þat the trompe sowneth in myn ere
[161] Riseth vp ye that been dede / and cometh to the
Iuggement [162] ¶ O goode god / muchel oghite a man / to
drede swich a Iuggement/. ther as we shullen been alle /
as seint Poul seith / biforn the seete of oure lord Ihesu
Crist/. [163] wher^r as he shal make / a general con-
gregacioñ / wher^r as no man may been absent/. [164] for
certes / there auailleth noon Essoyne / ne excusacioñ
[165] And nat oonly / that oure defautes shullen be
Iugged /. but eek^r that alle oure werkes / shullen openly
be knowe [166] ¶ And as seith Seint Bernard. ther ne
shal / no pledyng auaille ne sleighte /. we shullen yeuen
rekenyng of euerich ydel word^r / [167] ther shul we han
a Iuge / that may nat been deceyued ne corrupt. And why^s
for certes alle oure thoghtes / been discouered as to hym /.
ne for preyere / ne for meede / he shal nat been corrupt
[168] ¶ And therefore seith Salomon ¶ The wratthe of god /
[. no gap in the MS.]

¶ The .iiij.^{de}
cause of
contricioñ

¶ Sanctus
Ieronimus

¶ Sanctus Paulus

¶ Sanctus
Bernardus

¶ Salomon

¶ *Sanctus*
Anselmus

ne wol nat spare no wight /. for preyere ne for yifte /. and therefore at the day of doom / ther nys noon hope to escape [169] ¶ Wherefore as seith Seint' Anselm. / fful greet' angwyssh / shul the synful folk' haue at that' tyme /. [170] ther shal / the stierne and wrothe Iuge sitte aboue /. and vnder hym / the horrible put of helle open to destroyeden hym that noot biknowen hise synnes / whiche synnes / openly been shewed biforn god and biforn euery creature [171] ¶ And in the left syde / mo deueles / than herte may bithynke /. for to harye and drawe / the synful soules to the peyne of helle [172] ¶ And with Inne the hertes of folk' shal be the bitynge Conscience / and with oute forth / shal be the world al brennyng /. [173] Whider shal thanne the wrecched synful man flee / to hiden hym ¶ *certes* he may nat hyden hym / he moste come forth and shewen hym [174] ¶ ffor *certes* / as seith seint Ierome /. the Erthe shal casten hym / out of hym / and the See also / and the Eyr also / that shal be ful / of thonder clappes and lighntynnges / [175] ¶ Now soothly / who so wel remembreth hym of thise thynges / I gesse / þat his synne / shal nat' turne hym in delit' but to greet sorwe / for drede of the peyne of helle /. [176] And therefore seith Iob to god ¶ suffre lord / that' .I. may a while biwaille / and wepe / er I go with oute returnyng'. to the derke lond' / couered with the derknesse of deeth / [177] to the lond of mysese and of derknesse / where as is the shadwe of deeth /. where as ther is / noon ordre / or ordinañce / but grisly drede that euere shal laste [178] ¶ Loo / heere may ye seen / þat Iob preyde respit' a while / to biwepe and waille his trespas / for soothly / a day of respit'. is bettre than al the tresor of the world [179] ¶ And for as muche as a man / may acquiten hym self / biforn god by Penitence in ¹this world / and nat by tresor / therefore sholde he preye to god / to yeue hym respit' a while / to biwepe / and biwailen his trespas /. [180] for *certes* / al the sorwe / that a man myghte make / fro the bigynnyng'

¶ *Sanctus*
Ieronimus¶ *Iob ad deum*

of the world / nys but a litel thyng^t at regard^t of the sorwe
of helle / [181] ¶ The cause / why that Iob clepeth helle / ¶ Why Iob
the lond of derknesse /. [182] Vnder-stondeth / that he clepeth helle the
clepeth it londe of Erthe / for it is stable / and neuere shal
faille dirkt. for he that is in helle / hath defaute of
light material [183] for certes / the derke light^t that shal
come out of the fyr / that euere shal brenne / shal turne
hym al to peyne þat is in helle / for it sheweth him to the
horrible deueles / that hym tormenten / [184] couered with
the derknesse of death /. that is to seyn / that he þat is in
helle / shal haue defaute of the sighte of god /. for certes /
the sighte of god / is the lyf perdurable [185] ¶ The derk- ¶ Of the derk-
nesse of death / been the synnes / that the wrecched man nesse of death
hath / doon / whiche that destourben hym / to see the face
of god / right as dooþ a derk^t clowde / bitwixe vs and the
sonne [186] ¶ Lond of Misese / by cause that ther been ¶ Of the lond of
.iiij. maneres of defautes / agayn .iiij. thynges / that folk / Misese
of this world / han in this present lyf ||. that is to seyn
honours / delices / and riches [187] ¶ Agayns honour / ¶ Of honours /
haue they in helle / shame and confusioñ [188] ffor wel ye delices / &
woot^t that men clepen honour / the reuerence / that man riches.
doþ to man /. but in helle / is noon honour ne reuerence /.
for certes / namoore reuerence shal be doon there to a
kyng^t than to a knaue [189] ¶ ffor which god seith / by ¶ Of honours /
the prophete Ieremye || Thilke folk / þat me despisen / shul delices / &
been in despit^t / [190] ¶ Honour / is eek cleped greet^t lord- riches.
shipe / [.] ¶ dominus per
. no gap in the MS.] and heigh- Ieremiam
nesse / but in helle / shul they been al fortroden of deueles /. prophetam
[191] And god seith /. the horrible deueles shulle goon and ¶ dominus dicit /
comen / vp on the heuedes of the dampned folk^t /. And this
is for as muche / as the hyer that they were in this present^t
lyf /. the moore shulle they been abated and defouled in
helle / [192] ¶ Agayns the riches of this world^t / shul ¶ Agayns the
they han myse of pouerte / and this pouerte / shal been riches of this
in foure thynges /. [193] In defaute of tresor / of which that world

¶ Of defaute of
tresor vnde
dauid [P]

¶ Of defaute of
mete & drynke
¶ dominus per
Moysen

¶ Of defaute of
clothyng /

¶ dominus per
Ysayam
prophetam

¶ Of defaute of
freendes

¶ dominus per
Michaiam pro-
phetam

¶ Dauid propheta
|| Qui diligit
iniquitatem /
odit animam
suam

Dauid seith ¶ The riche folk / that embraceden and oneden
al hire herte to tresor of this world / shul slepe / in the
slepyng of deeth /. and no thyng^t ne shal they fynden in
hir handes / of al hir tresor [194] ¶ And moore ouer / the
myseyse of helle / shal been / in defaute of mete and
drinke /. [195] for god seith thus by Moyses /. They shul
been wasted with hunger and the briddes of helle / shul
deuouren hem with the bitter deeth / and the galle of the
dragon / shal been hire drynke / and the venym of the
dragon / hire morsels [196] ¶ And forther ouer / hire
myseyse / shal been in defaute of clothyng^t. for they shulle
be naked in body / as of clothyng^t. saue the fyr / in which
they brenne / and othere filthes / [197] *and* naked shul
they been of soule / as of alle manere vertues / which þat
is the clothyng of the soule /. Where been thanne the gaye
Robes / and the smale shetes / and the softe shertes [198]
¶ Loo / what seith god of hem by the prophete ysaye.
That vnder hem / shul been strawed Motthes / and hire
couertures / shulle been of wormes of helle [199] ¶ And
forther ouer / hir myseyse shal been / in defaute of
freendes / for he nys nat poure that hath goode freendes /
but there is no frend^t [200] for neither god ne no
creature / shal been freend to hem / and euerich of hem /
shal haten oother with deedly hate / [201] The sones and
the doghtren / shullen rebellen / agayns fader and mooder /
and kynrede agayns kynrede / and chiden and despisen /
euerich of hem oother bothe day and nyght^t. as god seith /
by the prophete Michias [202] ¶ And the louynge children /
that whilom loueden so flesshly euerich oother / wolden
euerich of hem / eten oother / if they myghte /. [203] for how
sholden they loue togidre in the peyne of helle / whan
they hated ech of hem oother in the prosperitee of this lyf
[204] ¶ ffor truste wel / hir flesshly loue / was deedly hate /
as seith the prophete Dauid ¶ who so that loueth wikked-
nesse / he hateth his soule /. [205] and who so hateth
his owene soule / certes / he may loue noon oother wight^t

in no manere / [206] and therefore / [in helle] is no solas /
 ne no freendshipe / but' euere / the moore flessly kynredes /
 that been in helle / the moore cursynges / the more chid-
 ynges / and the moore deedly hate / ther is among hem
 [207] ¶ And forther ouer / they shul haue defaute of alle ¶ How the
 manere delices / for certes delices / been after the appetites dampned shul
 of the .v. wittes /. as sighte /. herynge. smellynge /. sauor- haue defaute of
 ynge./and touchyng /. [208] but in helle / hir sighte shal be alle manere
 ful of derknesse and of smoke. and therefore / ful of delices
 toeres /. and hir herynge / ful of waymentyng / and of
 gryntyng of teeth / as seith Ihesu crist. [209] hir nose-
 thirles shullen be ful of stynkyng stynk/. And as seith
 Ysaye the prophete /. hir savoryng' shal be ful of bitter ¶ Ysayas
 galle /. [210] and touchyng of al hir body / ycouered propheta
 with fir that neuere shal quenche / and with wormes
 thiat' neuere shul dyen / as god seith / by the Mouth of ¶ dominus per
 Ysaye /. [211] And for as muche as they shul nat wene / Ysayan
 that they may dyen for peyne / and by hir deep flee fro
 peyne / that may they vnderstonden by the word of Iob /. ¶ Iob
 that seith / ther as is the shadwe of deeth [212] ¶ Certes
 a shadwe / hath the liknesse of the thyng. of which it is
 shadwe /. but shadwe is nat the same thyng' of which it is
 shadwe [213] ¶ Right so fareth the peyne of helle / it is ¶ Exemplum
 lyk deeth for the horrible angwiss' /. and why? for it
 peyneth hem euere / as though they sholde dye anon / but
 certes / they shal nat dye [214] ¶ ffor / as seith Seint ¶ sanctus
 Gregoric ¶ To wrecche caytyues / shal be deeth with-oute Gregorius
 deeth / and ende with-uten ende / and defaute with-oute
 failynge / [215] for hir deeth / shal alwey lyuen / and hir
 ende / shal euere bigynne / and hir defaute shal nat
 faille [216] ¶ And therefore / seith Seint Iohn the ¶ Sanctus
 Euauangelist /. They shullen folwe deeth / and they shul Iohannes
 nat fynde hym /. and they shul desiren to dye / and deeth Euauangelista
 shal flee fro hem [217] ¶ And eek Iob seith / that in helle ¶ Iob
 is noon ordre of rule /. [218] and al be it so that god hath
 creat' alle thynges in right ordre / and no thyng/ with-

outen ordre / but alle thynges / been ordeyned and nombred / yet natheles / they that been dampned / been no thyng^t in the ordre / ne holden noon ordre /. [219] for the

¶ *David propheta* erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt [220] ¶ ffor as the prophete

David seith ¶ god shal destroie the fruyt of the erthe / as fro hem / ne water / ne shal yeve hem no moisture /. ne the Eyr no refresshyng^t. ne fyr no light [221] ¶ ffor as

¶ *Sanctus Basilius*

seith seint Basilie ¶ The brennyng^e of the fyr of this world / shal god yeuen in helle / to hem þat been dampned /. [222] but the light / and the cleernesse / shal be yeuen in heuene to hise children /. right as the goode man / yeueth fless^h to hise children and bones to his houndes /. [223]

¶ *Sanctus Iob*

And for they shullen haue noon hope to escape seith seint Iob atte laste ¶ that ther shal horroure / and grisly drede / dwellen with-outen ende /. [224] Horroure / is alwey drede / of harm that is to come / and this drede shal euere dwelle in the hertes / of hem that been dampned / And therefore /

¶ How the dampned / han lorn al hir hope for .vij. causes

han they lorn al hire hope / for .vij. causes [225] ¶ first. for god ^tthat is hir Iuge / shal be / with-outen mercy to hem /. and they may nat^t ples^e hym / ne noon of hise halwes /. ne they / ne may yeue no thyng^t for hir raunsoñ /. [226] ne they haue no voys / to speke to hym /. ne they may nat fle fro peyne /. ne they haue no goodnesse in hem / that they mowe shewe to deliuer^e hem fro peyne

¶ *Salomon*

[227] ¶ And therefore seith Salomon ¶ The wikked man dyeth / and whan he is deed. he shal haue noon hope / to escape fro peyne [228] ¶ Who so thanne / wolde wel vnderstande the peynes / and bithynke hym wel / that he hath deserued thilke peynes for his synnes / certes / he sholde haue moore talent^t to siken and to wepe /. than for

¶ *Idem Salomon*

to syngen and to pleye / [229] ffor as that seith Salomon /. Who so that hadde the sciencie to knowe the peynes that been establissed and ordeyned for synne / he wolde make

¶ *Sanctus Augustinus*

sorwe / [230] Thilke sciencie / as seith seint Augustyn / maketh a man / to waymenten in his herte

¶ Of the .iiij.^o

[231] ¶ The fourthe point^t that oghte maken a man

to haue contricion / is the sorweful remembrañce of the good / that he hath left to doon / heere in erthe /. And eek the good that he hath lorn [232] ¶ soothly / the goode werkes ^{point þat oghte maken a man to haue contricion} þat he hath left /. outhere they been / the goode werkes that he hath wrought. er he fel / in to deedly synne /. or elles / the goode werkes that he wroughte / while he lay in synne [233] ¶ soothly / the goode werkes that he dide / biforn that he fil in synne / been al mortefied and astoned and dilled / by the ofte synnyng || [234] The othere goode werkes that he wroughte / whil he lay in deedly synne / þei been outrely dede / as to the lyf *perdurable* in heuene [235] ¶ Thanne thilke goode werkes / that been mortefied by ofte synnyng. whiche goode werkes he dide / whil he was in charitee /. ne mowe neuere quyken agayn / with-ouen verray penitence /. [236] and ther-of seith god / by the mouth of Ezechiel ¶ That if the rightfult man / re- ^{¶ dominus per Ezechielm} turne agayn from his rightwisnesse / and werke wikkednesse / shal he lyue? [237] nay /. for alle the goode werkes that he hath wrought ne shul neuere been in remembrañce / for he shal dyen in his synne [238] ¶ And vp-on thilke Chapitre / seith seint Gregorie thus ||. That we shulle vnderstonde this principally /. [239] that whan we doon deedly synne / it is for nocht thanne to rehercen / or drawn in-to memorie the goode werkes / that we han wrought biforn [240] ¶ ffor *certes* / in the werkyng of the deedly synne / ther is no trust to no good werk that we han doon biforn /. that is for to seyn /. as for to haue therby the lyf *perdurable* / in heuene /. [241] but natheles /. the goode werkes quyken agayn and comen agayn / and helpen and auailen / to haue the lyf *perdurable* in heuene / whan we han contricion /. [242] but soothly / the goode werkes that men doon / whil they been in deedly synne / for as muche / as they were doon in deedly synne. they may neuere quyke agayn / [243] ffor *certes* / thyng þat neuere hadde lyf. may neuere quykene / and natheles /. al be it that they ne auaille nocht /. to han the lyf *perdurable*. / yet auailen ^{¶ Sanctus Gregorius}

they / to abregge of the peyne of helle / or elles / to geten
temporal richesse. / [244] or elles / that god wole / the
rather enlumyne / and lightne the herte of the synful
man / to haue repentañce /. [245] and eek they auailen /
for to vsen a man to doon goode werkes / that the feend /
haue the lasse power of his soule / [246] And thus the
curteis lord Ihesu crist/. wole that no good werk'
be lost. for in somewhat it shal auaille /. [247] but for as
muche / as the goode werkes that men doon / whil they
been in good lyf /. been al mortefied / by synne folwyng.
and eek / sith that alle the goode werkes / that men doon /
whil they been in deedly synne / been outrelly dede /
for to haue the lyf perdurable /. [248] wel ¹may that man
that no good werk' ne dooth / synge thilke newe frenshe song
Iay tout perdu mon temps *et* mon labour [249] ¶ ffor
certes / synne bireueth a man / bothe goodnesse of nature /
and eek' the goodnesse of grace / [250] ¶ ffor soothly /
the grace of the hooly goost' fareth lyk fyr/ that may nat
been ydel / for fyr/ fayleth / anoon as it forleteth his wirk-
ynge / and right so. grace fayleth anoon as it forleteth his
werkynge / [251] then leseth the synful man the goodnesse
of glorie / that oonly is bihight' to goode men that labouren
and werken ||. [252] wel may he be sory thanne / that
oweth al his lif to god / as longe as he hath lyued / and
eek' as longe as he shal lyue / that no goodnesse ne hath /
to paye with his dette / to god / to whom he oweth al his
lyf ||. [253] ffor trust wel / he shal yeuen acountes / as seith
seint Bernard' of alle the goodes / that han be yeuen hym
in this present lyf. and how / he hath hem despended /
[254] noghit so muche /. that ther shal nat perisse an heer
of his heed /. ne a moment' of an houre / ne shal nat perisse
of his tyme / that he ne shal yeue of it a rekenyng/

¶ Sanctus
Bernardus

¶ Of the .v.º.
thyng þat oghte
moene a man to
contricion.

¶ Sanctus
Bernardus

[255] The fifthe' thyng' that oghte moeue a man to
contricioñ / is remembrance of the passioñ / that oure lord
Ihesu crist suffred for oure synnes / [256] for as seith
seint Bernard' ¶ whil that .i. lyue / I shal haue remem-

brance of the *trauailles* / that oure lord crist suffred in
prechyng/. [257] his werynesse in *trauailyng*. hise tempt-
 acioñs whan he fasted /. hise longe wakynges / whan he
 preyde /. hise teeres / whan that he weepe / for pitee. of
 good peple /. [258] the wo / and the shame / and the
 filthe / that men seyden to hym /. of the foule spittyng/
 that men spitte in his face /. of. the buffettes / that men
 yauen hym /. of the foule mowes / and of / the re-
 preues / that men to hym seyden /. [259] of the nayles /
with whiche he was nayled to the croys /. and of al the
 remenant of his passioñ that he suffred for my synnes /
 and no thyng for his gilt [260] ¶ And ye shul vnder-
 stonde / that in mannes synne / is euery manere of ordre
 or ordinañce / turned vp so doun [261] ¶ ffor it is sooth /
 that god and resoñ. *and* sensualitee / and the body of man /
 been ordeyned / that euerich / of these foure thynges /
 sholde haue lordshipe / ouer that oother /. [262] as thus /.
 god sholde haue lordshipe ouer resoñ /. and resoñ ouer
 sensualitee /. and sensualitee ouer the body of man /.
 [263] but soothly / whan man synneth / al this ordre or
 ordinañce / is turned vp so doun [264] ¶ And therefore
 thanne / for as muche as the resoñ of man / ne wol nat be
 subget ne obeisant to god that is his lord by right. ther-
 fore / leseth it the lordshipe / that it sholde haue / ouer
 sensualitee / and eek ouer the body of man /. [265] And
 why? ffor sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoñ /. and
 by that wey / leseth resoñ the lordshipe ouer sensualitee /
 and ouer the body /. [266] for right as resoñ is rebel to
 god / right so / is bothe sensualitee / rebel to resoñ / and
 the body also [267] ¶ And certes this disordinañce and
 this rebellioñ / oure lord Ihesu crist aboghite vp-on his
precious body ful deere / and herkneþ in which wise /
 [268] ¶ ffor as muche thanne as resoñ / is rebel to god? ther-
 fore / is man worthy to haue sorwe / and to be deed /.
 [269] this suffred oure lord Ihesu crist for man / after that
 he hadde be bitraysed of his disciple / and distreyned and

¶ how in mannes
 synne / is / euery
 manere of ordre /
 or ordinañce
 turned vp so
 doun

¶ Sanctus
Augustinus

bounde / so that his blood / brast' out' at euery nayl of hise
 handes / as seith seint Augustyn [270] ¶ And forther ouer /
 for as muchel as resoñ of man / ne wol nat daunte ¹sensu-
 alitee whan it may / therefore is man worthy to haue shame
 and this suffred oure lord Ihesu crist' for man / whan they
 spetten in his visage [271] ¶ And forther ouer/ for as
 muchel thanne / as the caytyf body of man / is rebel /
 bothe to resoñ and to sensualitee / therefore is it worthy the
 deeth [272] ¶ And this suffred our lord Ihesu crist for man
 vp-on the croys / where as ther was no part' of his body
 free / with-ouen greet peyne and bitter passioñ [273]
 ¶ And al this suffred Ihesu crist' þat neuere forfeled /
 [.]

no gap in the MS.] to muchel am I peyned for the
 thynges that I neuere deserued and to muche defouled /
 for shendshipe that man is worthy to haue [274] And ther-
 fore / may the synful man wel seye / as seith seint Bernard
 Acursed be the bitternesse of my synne /. for which / ther
 moste be suffred so muchel bitternesse /. [275] ffor certes /
 after the diuerse disconcordanices of oure wikkednesses /
 was the passioñ of Ihesu crist'. ordeyned in diuerse thynges /
 [276] as thus ¶ Certes / synful mannes soule / is bitraysed
 of the deuel / by coueitise of temporeel prosperitee / and
 scorned by deceite whan he cheseth fleshly delices / and
 yet is it tormented by Inpacience of aduersitee and dispeir
 by seruage and subieccioñ of synne / and atte laste / it is
 slayn fynally [277] ¶ ffor this disordinaunce of synful man
 was Ihesu crist' bitraysed / and after that was he bounde
 that cam for to vnbynden vs / of synne and peyne / [278]
 thanne was he by-scorned that oonly / sholde han been
 honoured in alle thynges and of alle thynges [279]
 ¶ Thanne was his visage / that oghte be desired to be seyn
 of al man kynde / in which visage Aungels desiren to
 looke / vileynsly bispet/. [280] thanne was he scourged /
 that no thyng hadde agilt' And finally / thanne was he
 crucified and slayn [281] ¶ Thanne was acompliced the

¶ Sanctus
Bernardus

word of ysaye / that seith / that he was wounded / for ¶ Ysayas
 oure mysdedes / and defouled for oure felonies / [282]
 ¶ Now sith that Ihesu crist took vp-on hym self / the
 peyne of alle oure wikkednesses /. muchel ogh̄te synful
 man wepen and biwayle / that for hise synnes goddes sone
 of heuene / sholde al this peyne endure [283] ¶ The sixte ¶ Of the .vi.^e
 thyng^e þat ogh̄te moeue a man to contricioñ / is the hope ¶ thyng that ogh̄te
 of .iij. thynges /. that is to seyn / foryifnesse of synne /. moeue a man
 and the yifte of grace / wel for to do and the glorie of to contricioñ /
 heuene / with which / god shal gerdone a man for hise thurghē hope of
 goode dedes / [284] ¶ And for as muche as Ihesu crist .iij. thynges .
 yeueth vs thise yiftes of his largesse / and of his souereyn
 bountee /. therefore is he cleped / Ihesus Nazarenus rex
 Iudeorum / [285] Ihesus / is to seyn saueour/ or sal-
 uacioñ on whom / men shul hope / to haue foryifnesse of
 synnes / which that [is] proprely / saluacioñ of synnes /
 [286] and therefore / seyde the Aungel to Ioseph Thou shalt ¶ How the
 clepen his name Ihesus / that shal sauen his peple of hir Aungel spak to
 synnes /. [287] And heer-of seith seint Peter /. Ther is ¶ Iosephe
 noon oother name vnder heuene / that is yeue to any man ¶ Sanctus Petrus
 by which / a man may be saued but oonly Ihesus^s /. [288]
 Nazarenus / is as muche for to seye / as floriss̄hyngē / in
 which a man shal hope /. that he þat yeueth hym remissioñ
 of synnes / shal yeue hym eek grace / wel for to do / for
 in the flour is hope of fruyt^t in tyme comyngē /. And in
 foryifnesse of synnes hope of grace / wel for to do [289] ¶ I
 was atte dore of thyn herte seith Ihesus and cleped for to
 entre /. he that openeth to me / shal haue foryifnesse of
 synne /. [290] .I wol entre in-to hym by my grace / and
 soupe with hym ¹by the goode werkes that he shal doon /
 whiche werkes / been the foode of god / and he shal soupe
 with me / by the grete ioye that I shal yeuen hym [291]
 ¶ Thus shal man hope /. for hise werkes of penaunce / that
 god shal yeuen hym his regne / as he bihooteth hym in the
 gospel

[292] ¶ Now shal a man vnderstonde / in which ¶ How a man shal
 be contrit

manere / shal been his contricioñ /. I seye / that it shal
 been vniuersal and total // this is to seyn A man shal be
 verray repentañt for alle hise synnes that he hath doon in
 delit of his thoght. for delit is ful perilous. / [293] ffor ther
 been / two manere of consentynges /. that oon of hem / is
 cleped consentynge of Affeccioñ / whan a man is moeued
 to do synne / and deliteth hym longe / for to thynke on
 that synne /. [294] and his reson aperceyueth it wel that
 it is synne / agayns the lawe of god / and yet his resoñ /
 refreyneth nat his foul delit or talent. though he se wel
 apertly / that it is / agayns the reuerence of god /. al-though
 his resoñ ne consente noght to doon that synne in dede /
 [295] yet seyn somme doctours / that swich delit that
 dwelleth longe / it is ful perilous / al be it neuere so lite /
 [296] ¶ And also / a man sholde sorwe namely / for al
 that euere he hath desired agayn the lawe of god with
 perfit consentynge of his resoñ / for ther-of is no doute /
 that it is deedly synne in consentynge ||. [297] ffor certes /
 ther is no deedly synne / that it nas first in mannes
 thoght. and after that in his delit /. and so forth / in-to
 consentynge and in-to dede /. [298] Wherfore I seye / that
 many men ne repenten hem neuere of swiche thoghtes and
 delites / ne neuere shryuen hem of it. but oonly / of the
 dede of grete synnes outward /. [299] wherfore I seye /
 that swiche wikked delites / and wikked thoghtes / been
 subtile bigileres / of hem that shullen be dampned [300]
 ¶ Moore ouer man oghte to sorwe / for hise wikkede
 wordes / as wel / as for hise wikkede dedes /. for certes /
 the repentañce of a synguler synne and nat repente of alle
 hise othere synnes /. or elles repenten hym / of alle hise
 othere synnes / and nat of a synguler synne / may nat
 auaille /. [301] for certes / god almyghty is al good / and
 ther-fore / he foryeueth al / or elles right noght. [302]
 And heer-of seith seint Augustyn /. [303] that
 god is enemy to euerich synnere /. and how thanne / he
 that obserueth o synne /. shal he haue foryifnesse of the

¶ Of two manere
of consentynges

¶ How a man
oghte / to
repenten hym /
for hise wikkede
wordes / as wel
as for hise
wikkede dedes

¶ Sanctus
Augustinus

remanaunt of hise othere synnes^s may [304] ¶ And forther
 ouer / contricioñ sholde be wonder sorweful / and ang- ¶ how con-
 wissous /. and therefore / yeueth hym god pleynty his tricioñ / sholde
 mercy / and therefore / whan my soule was angwissous be wonder
 with Inne me /. I hadde remembrance of god that sorweful
 my preyere myghte come to hym [305] ¶ fforther ouer /
 contricioñ moste be continueel /. and that man haue stede- ¶ how contricioñ
 fast purpos to shriuen hym / and for to amenden hym of moste be con-
 his lyf /. [306] ffor soothly / whil contricioñ lasteth / man tinueel
 may euere haue hope of foryifnesse / and of this / comth
 hate of synne /. that destroyeth synne / boþe in him self /
 and eek in oother folk. at his power ||. [307] ffor which
 seith Dauid ye that louen god / hateth wikkednesse / for ¶ Dauid
 trusteth wel / to loue god / is for to loue that he loueth /
 and hate that he hateth /

[308] ¶ The laste thyng^t that man shal vnderstonde in ¶ Wherof
 contricioñ / is this / wher-of / auayleth contricioñ ¶ I seye / Contricioñ /
 that som tyme / contricioñ / deliuereth a man fro synne /. auailleth
 [309] of which that Dauid seith / || .I. seye quod Dauid^t ¶ Dauid
¹that is to seyn ¶ I purposed fermely to shryue me / and
 thow Lord / relesedest / my synne [310] ¶ And right so
 as contricioñ auailleth noght^t with-uten sad purpos of
 shrifte / if man haue oportunitie / right so / litel worth is
 shrifte / or satisfaccioñ / with-uten contricioñ [311] ¶ And
 moore-ouer contricioñ / destroyeth the prisoñ of helle / ¶ How con-
 and maketh wayk and fieble alle the strengthes of the tricioñ destroyeth
 deuces / and restoreth / the yiftes of the hooly goost^t and the prisoñ of
 of alle goode vertues / [312] and it clenseth the soule of helle
 synne and deliuereth the soule / fro the peyne of helle /
 and fro the compaignye of the deuel / and fro the seruage
 of synne / and restoreth it^t to alle goodes spirituels / and
 to the compaignye and communyoñ of hooly chirche [313]
 ¶ And forther ouer /. it maketh hym that whilom was ¶ how con-
 sone of Ire / to be sone of grace /. and alle these thynges tricioñ / maketh
 been preued by hooly writ. [314] and therefore / he that him that whilom
 wolde sette his entente to these thynges / he were ful was sone of Ire /
 to be sone of
 grace

wys /. for soothly / he ne sholde nat thanne in al his lyf
 haue corage to synne / but yeuen his body and al his herte
 to the seruice of Ihesu crist /. and ther-of doon hym
 homnage /. [315] for sooply / oure sweete lord Ihesu crist.
 hath spared vs so debonairly in our folies / that if he ne
 hadde pitee of mannes soule a sory song' we myghten alle
 synge ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ

¶ Explicit prima pars penitentie ||. Et sequitur
 secunda pars eiusdem ॐ

T[316] He seconde partie of Penitence / is Confessiõ /
 that is signe of contriciõ / [317] ¶ Now shul ye
 vnderstonde / what is confessiõ /. and wheither
 it oghte nedes / be doon or noon /. and whiche
 thynges been couenable to verry Confessiõ

¶ What con-
 fession is

[318] ¶ ffirst shaltow vnderstonde / that confessiõ / is
 verry shewynge of synnes to the preest. [319] this is to
 seyn verry /. for he moste confessen hym / of alle the
 condiciouns / that bilongen to his synne / as ferforth as he
 kan / [320] al moot be seyde / and no thyng' excused ne
 hyd ne forwrapped / and noght auaunte thee of thy goode
 werkes [321] ¶ And forther ouer / it is necessarie to vnder-
 stonde / whennes that synnes spryngen / and how they
 encreessen and whiche they been

¶ Of spryngynge
 of synnes /
 secundum
 Paulum

[322] ¶ Of the spryngynge of synnes seith seint' Paul
 in this wise /. that right as by a man / synne entred first
 in-to this world. and thurgh that synne deeth /. Right so
 thilke deeth entred in-to alle men that synned / [323]
 and this man was Adam / by whom / synne entred in-to
 this world / whan he brak the comaundementz of god. /
 [324] And therefore / he that first was so myghty / that he
 sholde nat haue dyed / bicam swich oon that he moste
 nedes dye wheither he wolde or noon / and al his progenye
 in this world that in thilke man synned [325] ¶ Looke /
 that in thestaat of Innocence / whan Adam and Eue

¶ Of the tempta-
 cion of Adam in
 Paradys

naked weren in Paradys / and no thyng^t ne hadden shame
of hir nakednesse /. [326] how that the serpent^t that^t was
moost wily of alle othere beestes / that god hadde makid
seyde to the womman /. why comanded god to yow /
ye sholde nat^t eten / of euery tree in Paradys^s [327] The
womman answerde /. Of the fruyt^t quod she / of the trees
in Paradys / we feden vs / but sooply¹ of the fruyt of the
tree / that is in the myddel of Paradys / god forbad vs
for to ete / and nat touchen it/. lest *per* auenture we sholde
dyen [328] ¶ The serpent seyde to the womman /. nay /.
nay /. ye shul nat dyen of deeth / for sothe god woot^t. that
what day / that ye eten ther-of /. youre eyen shul opene /
and [ye] shul been as goddes / knowynge good and harm.
[329] ¶ The womman thanne saugh^t / that the tree was good
to feedyng^t. & fair to the eyen / and delitable to the
sigfite / she took of the fruyt^t of the tree / and eet^t it / and
yaf to hire housbonde / and he eet^t and anon the eyen of
hem bothe openeden /. [330] and whan that they knewe
that^t they were naked / they sowed of fige leues a maner^t
of breches / to hiden hire membres [331] ¶ There may ye
seen / that deedly synne / hath first^t suggestion of the
feend^t /. as sheweth heere by the naddre /. And afterward^t.
the delit of the fless^h / as sheweth heere by Eue /. And
after that^t the consentynge of resoñ /. as sheweth heere by
Adam / [332] ffor trust wel / though^t so were / that the
feend tempted Eue / that is to seyn the fless^h / and the
fless^h hadde delit^t in the beautee of the fruyt^t defendid /.
yet certes / til that resoñ / that is to seyn Adam / con-
sented to the etynge of the fruyt^t. yet stood he in thestaat
of Innocence [333] ¶ Of thilke Adam / tooke we thilke
synne original /. for of hym fless^hly descended be we alle
and engendred / of vile and corrupt mateere / [334] and
whan the soule / is put in oure body. right anon / is con-
tract^t original synne /. and that^t pat was erst^t but onoly
peyne of concupiscence / is afterward / bothe peyne and
synne /. [335] and therefore / be we alle born / sones of

wratthe and of dampnaciōn perdurable / if it nere baptesme that we receyuen / which bynyneth vs the culpe /. but for sothe / the peyne dwelleth with vs. as to temptaciōn. which peyne / highte concupiscence / [336] whan it is wrongfully disposed / or ordeyned in man /. it maketh hym coucite by coucite of flessĥ / flessĥly synne / by sighte of hise eyen / as to erthely thynges /. and coucite of hynesse / by pride of herte

¶ Of coucite of
Concupiscence

[337] ¶ Now as for to speken of the firste coucite / that is Concupiscence after the lawe of oure membres / that weren lawefulliche ymaked and by rightful Iugement of god [338] ¶ I seye for as muche / as man is nat obeisaunt to god that is his lord therefore / is the flessĥ to hym disobeisaunt thurgh Concupiscence which yet is cleped norrissyng of synne / and occasiō of synne /. [339] therefore / al the while that a man hath in hym / the peyne of Concupiscence /. it is impossible / but he be tempted somtime and moeued in his flessĥ to synne ./ [340] and this thyng may nat faille as longe as he lyueth /. it may wel wexe fieble and faille by vertu of baptesme / and by the grace of god / thurgh penitence / [341] but fully / ne shal it neuere quenche /. that he ne shal som tyme be moeued in hym self. but if he were al refreyded by siknesse / or by malefice of sorcerie / or colde drynkes /. [342] ffor lo / what seith seint Paul ¶ the flessĥ couciteth agayn the spirit / and the spirit agayn the flessĥ /. they been so contrarie and so stryuen /. that a man may nat alwey doon as he wolde / [343] ¶ The same seint Paul after his grete penañce / in water ¹and in lond /. in water by nyght / and by day in greet peril / & in greet peyne /. In lond / in famyne / in thurst / in cold and cloothlees and ones stoned almost to the deeth // [344] yet seyde he / allas I caytyf man /. who shal deliuere me fro the prisoñ of my caytyf body [345] ¶ And seint Ierome / whan he longe tyme hadde woned in desert / where as he hadde no compaignye / but of wilde beestes / where as he ne hadde

¶ Sanctus
Paulus

¶ Sanctus
Paulus

¶ sanctus
Ieronimus

no mete but herbes / and water to his drynke / ne no bed /
 but the naked erthe / for which his flessñ was blak' as an
 Ethiopeen for heete / and ny destroyed for coold' /. [346]
 yet seyde he / that the brennyng of lecherie boyled in al
 his body / [347] wherfore / I woot wel sykerly / that they
 been deceyued / that seyn / that they ne be nat tempted in
 hir body / [348] wisse on Seint Iame the Apostel /. ¶ Sanctus
 Iacobus
 Apostolus
 that seith / that every wight' is tempted in his owene con-
 cupiscence /. that is to seyn that euerich of vs / hath matere
 and occasiõ to be tempted of the norissynge of synne /
 that is in his body /. [349] And therefore seith Seint' Iohn ¶ Sanctus
 Iohannes
 Euauangelista
 the Euauangelist ||. If that we seyn / that we beth with oute
 synne /. we deceyue vs selue / and trouthe is nat in vs

[350] ¶ Now shal ye vnderstonde / in what manere / ¶ how synne
 wexeth or /
 encreesseth in
 man
 that synne wexeth / or encreesseth in man ¶ The firste
 thyng /. is thilke norissynge of synne of which I spak
 biforn /. thilke flessñly concupiscence /. [351] and after
 that/ comth the subiecciõ of the deuel / this is to seyn /
 the deueles bely / with which he bloweth in man / the fir
 of flessñly concupiscence /. [352] and after that' a man bi-
 thyneketh hym / wheither he wol doon or no thilke thing'
 to which he is tempted /. [353] And thanne /. if that a
 man withstonde and weyue the firste entisyng of his
 flessñ / and of the feend / thanne is it no synne / and if
 it so be / that he do nat so / thanne feeleth he anon a flambe
 of delit'. [354] and thanne is it good to be war / and kepen
 hym wel or elles / he wol falle anon in to consentynge of
 synne. / and thanne wol he do it. if he may haue tyme
 and place ||. [355] And of this matere seith Moyses by ¶ Moyses per
 demonem
 the deuel in this manere ¶ The feend seith / I wole
 chace and pursue the man / by wikked suggestiõ ./
 and I wole hente hym by moeuyng / or stiryng of
 synne. / I wol departe my prise or my praye by de-
 liberaciõ / and my lust' shal been accompliced in delit'.
 I wol drawe my swerd in consentynge /. [356] ffor certes /
 right' as a swerd departeth a thyng' in two peces / right'

so consentynge / departeth god fro man / and thanne
 wol I sleen hym / with myn hand in dede of synne / thus
 seith the feend /. [357] for certes / thanne is a man al
 deed in soule /. And thus is synne Accompliced by tempt-
 acioñ by delit. and by consentynge /. and thanne is the
 synne / cleped Actuel

¶ Of synne in
 two maneres
 venial and deedly

[358] ¶ ffor sothe / synne is in two maneres /. outhur /
 it is venial / or deedly synne ¶ Soothly / whan man loueth
 any creature moore than Ihesu crist oure creatour / thanne
 is it deedly synne ||. And venial synne is it. if man loue
 Ihesu crist lasse than hym /. [359] ffor sothe / the
 dede of this venial synne / is ful perilous for it amenuseth
 the loue / that men sholde han to god moore and moore
 [360] And therefore / if a man charge hym self with manye
 swiche venial synnes /. certes / but if so be that he som
 tyme discharge hym of hem by shrifte /. they mowe ful
 lightly amenuseth in hym al the loue that he hath to Ihesu
 crist. [361] and in this wise / skippeth venial in-to deedly
 synne ¹ ffor certes the moore that a man / chargeth his soule
 with venial synne the moore is he enclyned / to fallen in-to
 deedly synne /. [362] and therefore / lat vs nat be neeligent to
 deschargen vs of venial synnes ¶ ffor the prouerbe seith
 that manye smale / maken a greet [363] ¶ And herkne
 this ensample ||. A greet wawe of the sec comth som tyme
 with so greet a violence / that it drencheth the shipe
 ¶ And the same harm dooth som tyme / the smale dropes
 of water / that entren / thurgh a litel creuace in to the
 thurrok. and in the botme of the shipe / if men be so
 neeligent that they / ne discharge hem nat by tyme /.
 [364] And therefore / al though ther be a difference bitwixe
 these two causes of drenchynge /. algates / the shipe is
 dreynt. [365] ¶ Right so fareth it somtyme of deedly
 synne / and of anoyouse veniale synnes / whan they
 multiplie in a man so greetly / that thilke worldly thynges
 that he loueth thurgh whiche he synneth venially /. is
 as greet in his herte as the loue of god / or moore / [366]

¶ prouerbium

¶ exemplum

and therefore the loue of euery thyng^t. that is nat biset in god
 ne doon p^rincipally for goddes sake /. al though that a man
 loue it lasse than god / yet is it venial synne /. [367] and
 deedly synne / whan the loue of any thyng^t. wexeth
 in the herte of man / as muchel as the loue of god / or
 moore / [368] ¶ Deedly synne / as seith seint Augustyn / ¶ *Sanctus*
 is. whan a man / turneth his herte fro god / which that is *Augustinus*
verray souereyn bountee / that may nat chaunge / and
 yeueth his herte / to thyng^t that may chaunge and flitte /.
 [369] And certes / that is euery thyng^t saue god of heuene /.
 ffor sooth is / that if a man yeue his loue / the which pat
 he oweth al to god with al his herte /. vn-to a creature /.
 certes / as muche as he yeueth of his loue to thilke
 creature / so muche he bireueth fro god / [370] and ther
 fore dooth he synne /. for he that is dettour to god /. ne
 yeldeth nat to god al his dette / that is to seyn al the
 loue of his herte

[371] ¶ **N**OW sith man vnderstondeth generally / which
 is venial synne /. thanne is it couenable / to tellen specially
 of synnes / whiche that many a man *per auenture* / ne
 demeth hem nat synnes / and ne shryueth hem nat of the
 same thynges / and yet natheles / they been synnes
 [372] ¶ Soothly / as thise clerkes writen / this is to seyn /. ¶ *Of manye*
 that at euery tyme that a man eteth or drynketh / moore than *diuerse synnes*
 suffiseth to the sustenañce of his body / in certein he dooth
 synne [373] ¶ And eek^t whan he speketh moore than
 nedeth / it is synne ¶ Eke / whan he herkneth nat be-
 nignely the compleint^t of the poure [374] ¶ Eke / whan
 he is in heele of body and wol nat faste whan hym oghte
 faste / with-uten cause resonable ¶ Eke whan he slepeth
 moore than nedeth /. or whan he comth by thilke enchesoñ
 to late to chirche / or to othere werkes of charite [375]
 ¶ Eke / whan he vseth his wyf. with-uten souereyn desir
 of engendrure to the honour of god / or for the entente /
 to yelde to his wyf the dette of his body [376] ¶ Eke /
 whan he wol nat visite the sike and the prisoner if he may

¶ Eke / if he loue / wyf or child^r /. or oother worldly
 thyng^t. moore than resoñ requireth ¶ Eke / if he flatero or
 blandise / moore than hym ogñte / for any necessitee
 [377] ¶ Eke / if he amenuse or withdrawe the Almesse of
 the poure ¶ Eke / if he apparilleth his mete moore
 deliciously / than nede is / or ete to hastily by likerous-
 nesse [378] ¶ Eke / if he tale vanytees at chirche / or
 at goddes seruice / or that he be a talker^r of ydel wordes /
 of folye / or of vileynye /. for he shal yelden¹ acountes of
 it^r at the day of doome || [379] Eke / whan he biheteth /
 or assureth to do thynges / that he may nat^r perfourne
 ¶ Eke / whan that he / by lightnesse or folie / mysseyeth /
 or scorneth his neigheboore [380] ¶ Eke / whan he hath any
 wikked suspecioñ of thyng^t ther he ne woot of it no sooth-
 fastnesse || [381] Thise thynges and mo with-oute nombre /
 been synnes / as seith seint^r Augustyn.

[382] ¶ **N**OW shal men vnderstonde / that al be it so /
 that noon erthely man / may eschue alle venial synnes /. yet
 may he restreyne hym / by the brennyng loue / that he
 hath to oure lord Ihesu crist^r. and by preyeres and confessioñ
 and othere goode werkes /. so that it shal but litel greue ||
 [383] for as seith seint Augustyn ¶ If a man loue god
 in swich manere / that al that euere he dooth / is in the
 loue of god / and for the loue of god verrailly / for he
 brenneth in the loue of god / [384] Looke how mucche that
 a drope of water/ that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr
 anoyeth or greueth / so mucche anoyeth a venial
 synne vn-to a man / that is perfit^r in the loue of Ihesu
 crist / [385] ¶ Men may also / refreyne venial synne /
 by receyuyng worthily / of the precious body of
 Ihesu crist || [386] by receyuyng eek^r of hooly water/.
 by Almesdede /. by general confessioñ of Confitcor
 at masse and at Complyn / and by blessinge of
 Bisshopes and of preestes and oother goode werkes

¶ *Sanctus*
Augustinus

Explicit secunda pars Penitentie 𐀀

¶ Sequitur de septem peccatis mortalibus / et
eorum dependencijs circumstancijs & speciebus

N ¶ De Superbia 𐄂

[387]

Ow is it' bihouely thyngt. to telle / whiche been
the deedly synnes / this is to seyn / Chieftaynes
of synnes /. alle they renne in o lees / but' in
diuerse maneres ¶ Now been they cleped Chieftaynes /
for as muche as they been chief. and spryngen of alle
othere synnes / [388] ¶ Of the roote / of thise .vij. synnes /
thanne is pride the general roote of alle harmes /. ffor of
this roote / spryngen certein braunches /. As Ire. Enuye.
Accidie / or Slewthe. Auarice / or Coucitse to commune
vnderstondyng / Glotonye. and Lecherye. [389] And
cuerich of thise chief synnes hath hise braunches and hise
twigges as shal be declared / in hire Chapitres folwyng /

[no break in the MS.]

[*The Twigs of Pride.*]

[390] And thogh so be that no man kan outrely telle /
the nombre of twigges and of the harmes that cometh of
pride /. yet wol I shewe a partie of hem / as ye shul
vnderstonde [391] ¶ Ther is / Inobedience. Auauntyng.
Ypocrisie. Despit. Arrogance. Inpudence. swellyng of
herte. Insolence. Elacioñ. Inpaciencie. strif. Contumacie.
Presumpcioñ. Irreuerence. Pertinacie. Veyne glorie / and
many another twig that I kan nat declare [392] ¶ Ino- ¶ Of Inobedience
bedient is he / that disobeyeth for despit' to the comande-
mentz of god /. and to hise souereyns /. And to his goostly
fader / [393] ¶ Auauntour is he / that bosteth of the harm / ¶ Of Auauntyng
or of the bountee / that he hath doon [394] ¶ Ypocrite is ¶ Of Ypocrisie
he / that hideth to shewe hym swich as he is /. and
sheweth hym / swich as he noght' is [395] ¶ Despitous ¶ Of despit/
is he / that hath desdeyn of his neighebores / that is to
seyn of euene cristene / or hath despit' to doon that
hym oghte to do [396] ¶ Arrogant is he / that thynketh / ¶ Of Arrogance
pat he hath thilke bountees in hym that' he hath noght' or

weneth that he sholde haue hem / by hise desertes / or
elles / he demeth that he be that he nys nat/ [397] ¶ In-

¶ Of Inpudence

pudent is he / . that for his pride / hath no shame of hise
synnes / [398] ¶ Swellynge of herte is / . whan a man

¶ Of swellynge of herte

¶ Of Insolence

reioyseth hym / of harm that he hath doon / [399] ¶ Inso-

lent is he / . that despiseth in his Iuggement alle othere
folk/ as to regard of his value / . and of his konnyngt. and of

¶ Of Elacioun

¶ Inpacient is he / . that wol nat been ytaught ne vnder-

¶ Of Inpacience

and deffendeth his folye / [402] ¶ Contumax is he / . that

¶ Of Contumacie

thurgñ his indignacion is agayns euerich auctoritee or
power/ of hem that been hise souereyns [403] ¶ Pre-

¶ Of pre-
sumpcioun

sumpcioun is / whan a man vndertaketh an emprise that
hym oghte nat do / or elles that he may nat do / and this

¶ Of Irreuerence

is called surquidie ¶ Irreuerence is / whan men do nat
honour / there as hem oghte to doon / and waiten to be

¶ Of Pertinacie

reuerenced [404] ¶ Pertinacie is. whan man deffendeth
hise folies. and trusteth to muchel in his owene wit. [405]

¶ Of veyne glorie

¶ Veyneglorie / is for to haue pompe and delit' in his
temporeel hynesse / and glorifie hym in this worldly

¶ Of Ianglynge

estaat' [406] ¶ Ianglynge / is / whan men speken to
muche biforn folk'. and clappen as a Mille / and taken no
kepe what they seye /

¶ Of othere
pruice spesces of
pride

[407] ¶ And yet' is ther a *pruice* spece of pride / that
waiteth first' to be salewed er he wole salewe / al be he
lasse worth / than that oother is *per auenture* / . and eek he
waiteth or desireth / to sitte / or elles to goon aboute hym in
the wey / or kisse pax / . or been encensed / or goon to
offryng' biforn his neighebores / [408] and swiche semblable
thynges / agayns his duetee *per auenture* / but that he hath
his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir to be
magnified and honoured biforn the peple

¶ Of two
maneres of pride

[409] ¶ Now been ther two maneres of pride / . that
oon of hem / is with Inne the herte of man / and that

oother is with oute /. [410] of whiche soothly thise forseide thynges / and mo than I haue seyde / apertenen to pride that is in the herte of man / and that othere speeces of pride / been with oute /. [411] but natheles that oon of thise speeces of pride / is signe of that oother. / right as the gaye leefsel atte Tauerne / is signe of the wyn that is in the Celer /. [412] and this is in manye thynges / As in speche and contenañce / and in outrageous array of clothyngt. [413] for *certes* / if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothyngt Crist wolde nat haue noted and spoken of the clothyngt of thilke riche man in the gospel ||. [414] And as seith Seint Gregorie ¶ That precious clothyngt is cow- ¶ *Sanctus Gregorius*
pable / for the derthe of it. and for his softenesse / and for his strangenesse and degisynesse / and for the superfluitee / and for the inordinat scantnesse of it [415] ¶ Allas / may men nat seen as in oure dayes / the synful costlewe array of clothyngt /. and namely / in to muche superfluitee / or elles / in to desordinat scantnesse

[416] AS to the firste synne / in superfluitee of ¶ *Of superfluitee & outrageous array of clothinge*
clothyngt / which that maketh it so decre to harm of the peple /. [417] nat oonly / the costt of embrowdyngt / the degise / endentyngt / baryngt / owndyngt / palyngt / wyndyngt / or bendyngt / and semblable wastt of clooth / in vanitee / [418] but ther is ¹also costlewe furringt in hir gownes /. so muche powsonyngt of chisel to maken holes /. so muche daggyngt of sheres / [419] forth with the superfluitee in lengthe of the forseide gownes / trailyngt / in the dongt and in the Mire on horse and eek on foote / as wel / of men as of wommen /. that al thilke trailyngt is *verrailly* as in effectt wasted / consumed / thredbare / and roten with donge / rather / than it is yeuen to the poure / to greet damage of the forseide poure folk /. [420] and that in sondry wise /. this is to seyn / thatt the moore that clooth is wasted / the moore it costeth to the peple for the scantnesse [421] ¶ And farther ouer / if so be / that they wolde yeuen swich powsoned and

dagged clothyng^t to the poure folk /. it is nat^t conuenient
 to were for hire estaat^t ne suffisant^t to beete hire necessitee /
 to kepe hem / fro the distemperance of the firmament^t
 [422] ¶ Up-on þat oother side / to speken of the horrible
 disordinat scantnesse of clothyng^t. as been thise kuttet
 sloppes / or haynselyns / that thurg^h hire shortnesse / ne
 couere nat^t the shameful membres of man to wikked
 entente [423] ¶ Allas / somme of hem shewen the boco of
 hir shape and the horrible, swollen membres / that semeth /
 lik the maladie of Hirnia in the wrappyng of hir hoses /
 [424] and eek^t the buttokes of hem faren / as it were
 the hyndre part^t of a she Ape in the fulle of the Moone
 [425] ¶ And moore ouer / the wrecched swollen membres
 that they shewe / thurg^h the degisyng in departyng of
 hire hoses in whit and reed / semeth that half hir shame-
 ful priuee membres weren flayne [426] ¶ And if so be that
 they departen hire hoses in othere colours /. as is whit^t
 and blak^t. or whit^t and blew / or blak / and reed and so
 forth /. [427] thanne semeth it^t as by variañce of colour
 that half the partie of hire priuee membres were corrupt^t
 by the fir of seint Antony / or by Cancre / or by oother
 swich meschaunce [428] ¶ Of the hyndre part^t of hir
 buttokes. it is ful horrible for to see /. ffor certes / in that
 partie of hir body / ther as they purgen hir stynkyng
 ordure / [429] that foule partie shewe they to the peple
 prouly in despit^t of honestitee / the which honestitee that
 Ihesu crist^t and hise freendes obseruede / to shewen in hir
 lyue [430] ¶ NOW / of the outrageous array of wommen /
 god woot^t that though the visages of somme of hem / seme
 ful chaast^t and debonaire / yet notifie they in hire array of
 Atyr likerousnesse and pride [431] ¶ I sey nat^t that
 honestitee in clothyng of man or womman / is vncouen-
 able / but certes the superfluitee / or disordinat^t scantitee
 of clothyng / is repreneable [432] ¶ Also / the synne of
 aornement^t or of apparaille / is in thynges that apertenen
 to ridyng / as / in to manye delicat horses that been hoold-

¶ Of disordinat
scantnesse of
clothyng

¶ Of outrageous
array of Wommen

¶ Of outrageous
apparaille / of
thynges that

en for delit. that been so faire / fatte and costlewe /. [433] apertenen to ridyng
 and also / to many a vicious knaue / that is sustened by
 cause of hem / In to curious harneys /. as in sadesles / in
 Crouperes / peytrels and bridles couered with *precious*
 clothynge and riche / barres and plates of gold and of
 siluer /. [434] for which god seith / by Zakarie the ¶ dominus per zakariam propheta
 prophete / I wol confounde the rideres of swiche horses
 [435] ¶ This folk taken litel reward of the ridyng of
 goddes sone of heuene / and of his harneys whan he rood
 vp on the Asse / and ne hadde noon oother harneys / but
 the poure clothes of hise disciples / ne / we ¹ne rede nat.
 that euere he rood on oother beest. [436] I speke this /
 for the synne of *superfluitee* / and nat for resonable
 honestitee / whan reson it requireth [437] And forther/
 certes pride is greetly notified in holdyng of greet meynce / ¶ Of pride / in holdyng of greet meynce
 whan they be of litel profit or of right no profit.
 [438] and namely / whan that meynce / is felonous and dama-
 geous to the peple by hardynesse of heigh lordshipe / or by
 wey of Offices /. [439] ffor certes swiche lordes / sellen
 thanne hir lordshipe to the deuel of helle / whanne they
 sustenen / the wikkednesse of hir meynce [440] ¶ Or elles /
 whan this folk of lowe degree / as thilke that holden
 hostelries / sustenyng the theft of hire hostilers /
 and that is / in many manere of deceites /
 [441] ¶ Thilke manere of folk / been the flyes that folwen
 the hony / or elles / the houndes / that folwen the careyne /.
 Swich forseide folk stranglen spiritually hir lordshipes /.
 [442] for which / thus seith Dauid the prophete / ¶ Dauid propheta Wikked
 death moote come vp thilke lordshipes /. and god yeue / that
 they moote descenden in-to helle al doun / al doun /. for in
 hire houses / been iniquitees and shrewednesses / and nat god
 of heuene /. [443] and certes / but if they doon amēde-
 ment. right / as god yaf his benyson to Pharao / by the
 seruice of Iacob / and to Laban / by the seruice of Ioseph. /
 right so / god wol yeue his malison to swiche lordshipes /.
 as sustenen the wikkednesse of hir seruauantz / but if they

- ¶ Of pride of the table come to amendement [444] ¶ Pride of the table / appeereth eek' ful ofte ./ for *certes* riche men been cleped to festes / and poure folk' been put' away and rebuked [445] Also
- ¶ Of excesse of diuerse metes and drynkes in excesse of diuerse metes and drynkes / and namely / swiche manere bake metes *and* dissh' metes brennyng of wilde fir / and peynted and castelled with papir / and semblable wast/ so that' it is abusion for to thynke [446]
- ¶ Of to great preciousnesse of vessel / and curiositee of Mynstralcie / by whiche / a man is stired the moore to delices of luxurie / [447] if so be that he sette his herte / the lasse vp-on oure lord Ihesu crist /. certeyn it is a synne / *and* certainly / the delices / myghte been so grete in this caas / that man myghte lightly / falle by hem in-to
- ¶ Of the especes that sourden of pride deedly synne [448] The especes that sourden of pride / soothly / whan they sourden of malice ymaged / auised and forncast'. or elles of vsage / been deedly synnes / it is no doute /. [449] And whan they sourden by freletee vn-
aused / and sodeynly withdrawen ayeyn / al been they greuouse synnes /. I gesse / that they ne been nat
- ¶ Wher-of / pride sourdeth and spryngeth deedly [450] Now myghte men axe / wher-of that pride sourdeth / and spryngeth and I seye / somtyme it spryngeth / of the goodes of nature / and som tyme / of the goodes of ffortune /. and som tyme / of the goodes of grace [451] ¶ Certes / the goodes of nature / stonden / outhur in goodes of body / or in goodes of soule [452]
- ¶ Of goodes of nature ¶ Certes / goodes of body / been heele of body. as strengthe / deliuerresse / beautee / gentries / franchise / [453] ¶ Goodes of nature of the soule / been good wit sharpe vnderstondyng. subtil engyn. vertu natureel. good
- ¶ Of goodes / of / the soule ¶ Goodes of nature of the soule / been good wit sharpe vnderstondyng. subtil engyn. vertu natureel. good memorie [454] ¶ Goodes of ffortune / been richesse / hyghe degrees of lordshipes. preisynges of the peple [455]
- ¶ Of goodes of ffortune ¶ Goodes of ffortune / been richesse / hyghe degrees of lordshipes. preisynges of the peple [455]
- ¶ Of goodes of grace ¶ Goodes of grace / been science. power/ to suffre spiritueel trauaille. benignitee. vertuous contemplacion. withstondyng of temptacion / and semblable thynges / [456] of whiche forseide goodes. certes it is a ful greet folye / a man to priden hym / in any of hem alle [457]

NOw as for to speken of goodes of nature /. god woot that
 som tyme we han hem / in nature / as muche to oure
¹damage / as to oure profit [458] ¶ As for to speken of
 heele of body /. certes / it passeth ful lightly / and eek it
 is / ful ofte encheson of the siknesse of oure soule /. for
 God woot the flessĥ / is a ful greet enemy to the soule /.
 and therefore / the moore that the body is hool / the moore
 be we in peril to falle [459] ¶ Eke / for to pride / hym in ¶ Of pride / of
 his strengthe of body / it is an heigh folye /. ffor certes /
 the flessĥ coueiteth agayn the spirit /. and ay / the moore
 strong^r that the flessĥ is / the sorier may the soule be /.
 [460] and ouer al this / strengthe of body and worldly
 hardynesse / causeth ful ofte many a man / to peril and
 meschaunce [461] ¶ Eek^r for to pride hym of his ¶ Of pride of
 gentrie / is ful greet folie/ for ofte tyme / the gentrie of the
 body / binymeth the gentrie of the soule /. and eek^r we
 ben alle / of o fader / and of o mooder /. and alle we been
 of o nature / roten. and corrupt^r. bothe riche and poure ||.
 [462] ffor sothe / o manere gentrie / is for to preise /
 that apparailleth mannes corage with vertues and moralitees/
 and maketh hym cristes child. [463] for truste wel / that
 ouer what man þat synne hath maistrie / he is / a verray
 cherl to synne

[464] ¶ **NO**w been ther generale signes of gentillesse /. ¶ Of generale
 as eschewynge of vice and ribaudye / and seruage of
 signes / of /
 gentillesse
 synne /. in word / in werk /. and contenañce /. [465] and
 vsynge vertu / curteisye. and clennessse /. and to be
 liberal /. that is to seyn / large by mesure /. for thilke that
 passeth mesure / is folie and synne [466] ¶ Another is /
 to remembre hym of bountee / that he of oother folk^r hath
 receyued [467] ¶ Another is / to be benigne to hise goode
 subgetis ||. wherfore seith senek^r ¶ ther is no thing^r moore ¶ Seneca
 couenable to a man of heigh estaat^r /. than debonairetee
 and pitee [468] And therefore / thise flyes / that men ¶ Nota
 clepeth bees /. whan they maken hir^r kyng^r. they chesen
 oon that hath no prikke / wherwith he may styngre [469]

¶ Another is / man to haue a noble herte / and a diligent
to attayne to heighe vertuose thynges [470] **N**ow certes /
¶ Of pride in the
yittes of grace a man to pride hym in the goodes of grace / is eek / an
outrageous folie / for thilke yifte of grace / that sholde
haue turned hym to goodnesse and to medicine / turneth
hym to venym and to confusioñ / as seith seint' Gregorie
¶ Of pride in the
goodes of fortune [471] Certes also / who so prideth hym / in the goodes of
ffortune /. he is a ful greet fool /. for som tyme is a man a
greet lord by the morwe /. that is a caytyf and a wrecche
er it be nyghit. [472] and somtyme / the richesse of a man /
is cause of his deþ / somtyme / the delices of a man / is
cause of the greuous maladye / thurgñ which he dyeth
¶ Of commen-
dacioun of the
peple. [473] Certes / the commendacioñ of the peple / is som-
tyme / ful fals and ful brotel for to triste /. this day they
preyse / tomorwe they blame / [474] god woot' desir/ to
haue commendacioñ of the peple / hath caused deeth / to
many a bisy man [475] **N**ow sith that so is / that ye han
vnderstonde what is pride / and whiche been the speces of
it. and whennes pride sourdeth / and spryngeth

[476] ¶ *Remedium contra peccatum Superbie* 𐄂

¶ Of humilite or
mekenesse **N**ow shul ye vnderstonde which is the remedie agayns /
the synne of pride /. and that is humylitee / or
mekenesse /. [477] that is a vertu / thurgñ which. a man /
hath verray knoweleche of hym self. and holdeth of hym-
self/ no pris ne deyntee /. as in regard of hise desertes /
considerynge euere his freletee [478] **N**ow been ther .iiij.
¶ Of .iiij. maneres
of humilitee maneres of humylitee /. as humylitee in herte /. and another
humylitee in his ¹mouth ¶ The thridde in hise werkes
¶ Of .iiij. maneres
of humilitee in
herte [479] ¶ The humilitee in herte / is in .iiij. maneres ¶ that
oon is / whan a man / holdeth hym self' as noghit' worth
biforn god of heuene ¶. Another is /. whan he ne despiseth

noon oother man [480] ¶ The thridde is / whan he
 rekketh nat. though men holde hym noghit worth ¶ The
 ferthe is / whan he nys nat sory of his humiliacioñ [481]
 ¶ Also the humilitee of mouth /. is in .iiij. thynges ¶ In ¶ Or .iiij.
 attempree speche ¶ And in humblesse of speche ¶ and thynges / of /
 whan he biknoweth with his owene mouth /. that he is humilitee of
 swich / as hym thynketh that he is in his herte ¶ Another mouthe
 is /. whan he preiseth the bountee of another man /. and
 no thyng ther of amenuseth / [482] ¶ Humilitee eek in ¶ Or .iiij. maneres
 werkes is in .iiij. maneres ¶ The firste is / whan he putteth of / humilitee in
 othere men biforn hym ¶ The seconde is / to chese the werkes
 loweste place ouer al ¶ The thridde is / gladly to assente
 to conseil [483] ¶ The ferthe / is to stonde gladly / to
 the award of hise souereyns /. or of hym / that is in hyer
 degree /. certein this is a greet werk of humylitee 𐞂

¶ Sequitur de Inuidia 𐞂

[484]
After Pride wol I speken / of the foule synne of Enuye ¶ What Enuye is
 which is / as by the word of the Philosopre / secundum
 sorwe / of oother mannes prosperitee /. and after the Philosophum et
 word of seint Augustyn /. it is sorwe of oother mannes secundum
 wele / and ioye of othere mennes harm / [485] ¶ This Augustinum
 synne is platly agayns the hooly /. Al be it so /
 that euery synne is agayns the hooly goost/. yet natheles
 for as muche / as bountee / aperteneth proprely to the
 hooly. and Enuye comth proprely. of malice /. ther-
 fore it is proprely / agayn the bountee of the hooly goost
 [486] ¶ Now hath malice two speces /. that is to seyn ¶ Of .ij. speces
 hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse /. or elles / the flessch of of malice / and
 man is so blynd / that he considereþ nat. that he is in the firste / is
 synne /. or rekketh nat that he is in synne /. which hardnesse / of
 is the hardnesse of the deuel / [487] ¶ That oother ¶ Of another spece
 speche of malice / is whan a man werreyeth trouthe / of malice
 whan he woot that it is trouthe /. And eek / whan
 he werreyeth the grace / that god hath yeue to his

neighebore / and al this / is by Enuye [488] ¶ Certes / thanne is Enuye the worste synne that is /. ffor soothly / alle othere synnes been som tyme oonly / agayns o special vertu /. [489] but certes / Enuye is agayns alle vertues / and agayns alle goodnesses /. for it is sory / of alle the bountees of his neighebore / and in this manere / it is diuers from alle othere synnes [490] ¶ ffor wel vnnethe / is ther any synne / that it ne hath / som delit^t in itself. saue oonly Enuye / that euere hath in itself^t angwiss^h and sorwe [491] ¶ The spesces of Enuye been thise / Ther is first^t. sorwe of oother mannes goodnesse / and of his prosperitee. / and prosperitee / is kyndely matere of Ioye/. thanne is Enuye a synne agayns kynde [492] ¶ The seconde spece of Enuye / is ioye of oother mannes harm /. and that is proprely lyk to the deuel /. that euere reioyseth hym of mannes harm [493] ¶ Of these two spesces / comth bakbityng^t. and this synne / of bakbityng^t or detraccion / hath certeine spesces / as thus ¶ Som man preiseth his neighebore by a wikke entente /. [494] for he maketh alwey a wikked knotte ¹atte laste ende /. alwey / he makef^h a but / atte laste ende / that is digne of moore blame /. than worth is al the preisyng^e [495] ¶ The seconde spece is / that if a man be good / and dooth / or seith a thing^t to good entente /. the bakbiter^t wol turne all thilke goodnesse / vp so doun / to his shrewed entente [496] ¶ The thridde is / to amenuse the bountee of his neighebore [497] ¶ The fourthe spece of bakbityng^t is this /. that if men speke goodnesse of a man /. thanne wol the bakbiter^t seyn /. pardee /. swich a man / is yet^t bet than he / in dispreisyng^e / of hym that men preise / [498] ¶ The fifte spece is this /. for to consente gladly and herkne gladly to the harm that men speke of / oother folk ||. this synne is ful greet^t and ay encreeseth / after the wikked entente of the bakbiter^t [499] After bakbityng^t cometh gruechchyng^t or Murmuracionⁿ /. and somtyme it spryngeth of Inpacience agayns god /. and somtyme agayns man

¶ Of the firste spece of Enuye

¶ Of the .ij.^{de} spece / of Enuye¶ The firste spece / of bakbityng^e¶ The .ij.^{de} spece of / bakbityng^e¶ The .iiij.^{de} spece¶ The .iiij.^{de} spece¶ The v.^o spece

¶ Of gruechchyng / or Murmuracioun

[500] ¶ Agayns god it is / whan a man gruceheth agayn
the peynes of helle / or agayns pouerte / or los of catel.
agayn reyn / or tempest. or elles gruceheth / that shrewes
han prosperitee / or elles / for that goode men han Ad-
uersitee / [501] and alle these thynges sholde men suffre
patiently / for they comen by the rightful Iuggement and

ordinaunce of god [502] ¶ Som tyme comth grucehing^t of ¶ Of grucehyng/
Auarice / as Iudas gruced agayns the Magdaleyne / whan ^{pat comth of}
she enoynte / the heued of our lord Ihesu crist. with hir ^{Auarice}

precious oynement [503] ¶ This maner^t murmure is swich.
as whan man gruceheth / of goodnesse / þat hym self
dooth / or that oother folk doon of hir owene catel [504]

¶ Som tyme comth murmure of pride / as whan Simon ¶ Of murmure
the Pharisee / gruceched agayn the Magdaleyne / whan ^{pat comth of}
she approached to Ihesu crist. and weepe at his feet for hire ^{pride}

synnes [505] ¶ And somtyme grucehyng^t sourdeth of ¶ Of murmure
Enuye / whan men discouereþ a mannes harm that was ^{pat sourdeth of}
pryuee / or bereth hym on hond / thyng^t that is fals [506] ^{Euuye}

¶ Murmure eek / is ofte amonges seruauntz / that grucehen / ¶ Of murmure
whan hir souereyns bidden hem doon leueful thynges / ^{amonges}
[507] and for as muche / as they dar nat openly withseyo ^{seruauntz}

the comaundementz of hir souereyns / yet wol they seyn
harm / and grucehe and murmure priuely for verray
despit / [508] whiche wordes / men clepen the deueles
Pater noster / though so be that the deuel ne hadde
neuer Pater noster / but that lewed folk^t yeuen it swich

a name [509] ¶ Som tyme / grucehyng^t comth of Ire / or ¶ Of grucehyng/
prive hate / that norisseth rancour in herte / as afterward ^{that comth of}
I shal declare [510] Thanne cometh eek^t bitterness of ^{Ire}

herte / thurgh which bitterness / euery good dede of his ^{¶ Of bitterness}
neighebor / semeth to hym / bitter and vnsauory [511] ^{of herte}

¶ Thanne cometh discord / that vnbyndeth alle manere ¶ Of discord
of frendshipe ¶ Thanne comth / seornynge of [. ¶ Of seornynge/

. no gap in the MS.] his neighe-
bor / al do he neuer so weel [512] ¶ Thanne comth / ¶ Of Accusynge/
Accusynge / as whan man seketh occasiõ / to anoyen his

neighebor / which that is lyk / to the craft of the deuel /
that waiteth / bothe nyght and day to accusen vs alle
[513] ¶ Thanne comth malignitee / thurgh which a man
anoyeth his neighebor priuely / if he may. [514] and if he
noght may / algate / his wikked wil / ne shal nat wante /.
as for to brennen his hous pryuely /. or empoysone / or sleen
hise beestes / and semblable thynges /.

¶ Of Malignitee

¹¶ *Remedium contra peccatum Inuidie*

[515] **N**OW wol I speke of the remedie / agayns the foule
synne of Enuye / ¶ first is the louyng of god
principal / and louyng / of his neighebor as hym self /. for
soothly / that oon ne may nat been / with-oute that
oother /. [516] And truste wel / that in the name of thy
neighebores /. thou shalt vnderstonde the name of thy
brother ffor certes / alle we haue o fader flesshly / and o
mooder / that is to seyn / Adam and Eue /. and eek o fader
espritueel / and that is god of heuene [517] ¶ Thy
neighebores / artow holden for to loue and wilne hym alle
goodnesse /. and therefore seith god / loue thy neighebores as
thy selue / that is to seyn / to saluacion / of lyf and of
soule [518] ¶ And moore ouer / thou shalt loue hym in
word / and in benigne amonestyng / and chastisyng /
and conforten hym / in hise anoyes / and preye for hym with
al thyn herte / [519] ¶ And in dede / thou shalt loue hym
in swich wise /. that thou shalt doon to hym in charitee /
as thou woldest that it were doon to thyn owene persone /.
[520] And therefore / thou ne shalt doon hym no damage
in wikked word / ne harm in his body / ne in his catel /
ne in his soule / by entissyng of wikked ensample [521]
¶ Thou shalt nat desiren his wyf ne none of hise thynges
Vnderstood eek / that in the name of neighebor / is com-
prehended his enemy [522] ¶ certes man shal louen his
enemy / by the comandement of god /. and soothly / thy
freend / shaltow loue in god [523] ¶ I seye / thyn
enemy / shaltow loue for goddes sake / by his comande-

¶ How a man /
shal loue his
neighebores¶ How in the
name of neigh-
bor / is compre-
hended a mannes
enemy

ment ¶ ffor if it were reson þat a man sholde haten his enemy /. for sothe / god nolde nat' receyuen vs to his loue / that been hise enemys [524] ¶ Agayns .iiij. manere of ¶ How a man shal do .iiij. thynges that his enemy dooth to hym /. he shal doon .iiij. thynges / agayns .iiij. manere of thynges as thus [525] ¶ Agayns hate and rancour of herte / .iiij. manere of thynges that his enemy dooth to hym he shal loue hym in herte ¶ Agayns chidyng' and wikkede wordes / he shal preye for his enemy ¶ And agayn wikkede dede of his enemy /. he shal doon hym. bountee [526] ¶ ffor crist seith / loueth youre enemys / and preyeth for hem that' speke yow harm /. and eek' for hem / that yow chacen and pursewen and dooth bountee / to hem that yow haten ¶ Loo / thus comaundeth vs oure lord Ihesu crist'. to do / to oure enemys /. [527] ffor soothly nature dryueth vs / to louen oure freendes /. and parfey / oure enemys / han moore nede to loue than oure freendes /. and they that moore nede haue / certes / to hem shal men doon goodnesse / [528] and certes in thilke dede / haue we remembrañce / of the loue of Ihesu crist' that deyde for hise enemys /. [529] and in as muche as thilke loue / is the moore greuous to perfourne / in so muche / is the moore gretter the merite / and ther-fore the louynge of oure enemy / hath confounded / the venym of the deuel /. [530] ffor right' as the deuel / is disconfited by humylitee /. right' so / is he wounded to the deeth / by loue of oure enemy [531] ¶ Certes. / thanne is loue the medicine / that easteth out' the venym of Enuye / fro mannes herte [532] ¶ The speses of this paas / shullen be moore largely in hir Chapitres folwyng'e declared ॐ ॐ ॐ

¶ Sequitur de Ira ॐ

[533]
After Enuye / wol I discryuen the synne of Ire /. ffor soothly / who so hath enuye vpon his neighebor / anon he wole comunly fynde hym a matere of wratthe / in word / or ¹in dede / agayns hym / to whom he hath enuye ||. [534] And as wel comth Ire of pride /

as of enuye /. for soothly / he that is proude or enuyous /
is lightly wrooth

[535] ¶ This synne of Ire / after the discryuyng^t of
seint^t Augustyn / is wikked wil / to been auenged / by
word / or by dede /. [536] Ire after the Philosophre /. is
the feruent blood of man / yquyked in his herte / thurgh^t
which he wole harm / to hym that he hateth [537] ¶ ffor
certes the herte of man by eschawfyng^e and moeuyng^e of
his blood / wexeth so trouble / that he is / out of alle
Iuggement^t of resoñ [538] ¶ But ye shal vnderstonde /
that Ire is in two maneres / that oon of hem is good / and
that oother is wikked / [539] ¶ The goode Ire / is by
Ialousie of goodnesse / thurgh^t which / a man is wrooth
with wikkednesse / and agayns wikkednesse /. and ther-
fore seith a wys man /. that Ire is bet than pley || [540]
This Ire / is with debonairetee /. and it is wrooth with-
outen bitternesse / nat wrooth agayns the man / but
wrooth / with the mysdede of / the man /. as seith the
prophete Dauid Irascimini & nolite peccare [541] **N**OW
vnderstondeth / that wikked Ire / is in two maneres /
that^t is to seyn / sodeyn Ire / or hastif Ire withouten
auisement^t and consentynge of resoñ /. [542] the menyng^t
and the sens of this / is / that the resoñ of man ne con-
sente nat^t to thilke sodeyn Ire / and thanne it is venial
[543] ¶ Another Ire is ful wikked / that comth of
felonie of herte auysed and cast biforn / with wikked wil /
to do vengeance / and therto / his resoñ consenteth and
soothly / this is deedly synne [544] ¶ This Ire / is so dis-
pleasant^t to god that it troubleth his hous / and chaceth the
hooly goost^t out^t of mannes soule / and wasteth and de-
stroyeth the liknesse of god / that is to seyn / the vertu
that is in mannes soule / [545] and put in hym / the lik-
nesse of the deuel and bynymeth the man fro god / that
is / his rightful lord /. [546] this Ire / is a ful greet
plesauunce to the deuel /. for it is the deuceles fourneys /
that is eschawfed / with the fir of helle ||. [547] ffor certes /

¶ sanctus
Augustinus
¶ Philosophus

¶ Of Ire in two
maneres

¶ Of good Ire

¶ Sapiens

¶ Dauid propheta

¶ Of wikked Ire
in ije. maneres /
and the firste / is
sodeyn Ire

¶ Of Ire þat
comth of felonie
of herte auysed &
cast biforn

right so / as fir is moore mighty / to destroyen erthely
 thynges / than any oother Element. right so Ire is myghty to
 destroyen alle spiritueel thynges [548] ¶ Looke /. how that
 fir of smale gledes that been almoost dede vnder asshen
 wollen quike agayn / whan they been touched with
 brymston^s / right so Ire wol eueremo quyken agayn /
 whan it is touched / by the pride that is couered in
 mannes herte / [549] ffor certes / fir ne may nat comen
 out of no thyng. but if it were first in the same thyng
 natureelly / as fir / is drawn out of flyntes with steel
 [550] And right so / as pride is ofte tyme matere of Ire /
 right so is rancour / norice and keper' of Ire [551] Ther is
 a maner tree as seith sein Ysidre / that whan men
 maken fire of thilke tree / and couere the coles of it with
 Asshen soothly / the fir of it wol lasten al a yeer or moore ||.
 [552] And right so / fareth it of rancour/. whan it is
 ones conceyued in the hertes of som men certein / it wol
 lasten *perauenture* / from oon Estre day vnto another
 Estre day / and moore /. [553] but certes / thilke man /
 is ful fer fro the mercy of god / in thilke while

¶ Nota secundum Ysodorum

¶ exemplum

[554] ¶ In this forseide deueles fourneys / ther
 forgen .iiij. shrewes ||. Pride that ay bloweth and encreeseth
 the fir / by chidyng and wikked wordes [555] ¶ Thanne
 stant' Enuye / and holdeth the hote Iren vpon the herte
 of man / with a peire of longe toonges / of long' rancour
 [556] ¶ And thanne stant' the synne of contumelie / or
 strif' and cheeste / and batereth and forgeth / by vileyns
 repreuynges [557] ¶ Certes / this cursed synne anoyeth
¹bothe to the man hym self / and eek to his neighebores
 ¶ ffor soothly / almoost' al the harm that any man
 dooth to his neighebores / comth of wratthe /. [558] for
 certes outrageous wratthe / dooth / al that euere / the
 deuyl hym comaundeth /. for he ne spareth neither
 crist' ne his sweete mooder/. [559] And in his out-
 rageous anger and Ire / allas / allas / ful many oon
 at that tyme / feeleth in his herte ful wikkedly /

¶ Of .iiij. shrewes
 þat forgen alwey
 in the deueles
 fourneys

bothe of crist and of alle hise halwes [560] ¶ Is
 nat this a cursed vice? yis certes / Allas / it bynymeth
 from man his wit and his resoñ / and al his debonaire
 lif/ espritueel / that sholde kepen his soule [561]
 ¶ Certes / it bynymeth eek' goddes due lordshipe / and
 that' is mannes soule / and the loue of hise neighebores ||.
 It stryueth eek' alday agayn trouthe /. It reueth hym / the
 quiete of his herte / and subuerteth his soule /

¶ Of the engen-
 dres that comen
 of pride

[562] Of Ire / comen thise stynkyng engendres
 ¶ first' hate / that is oold wratthe. discord / thurgh which
 a man / forsaketh his olde freend' ful
 longe / [563] ¶ And thanne cometh werre / and every
 manere of wrong' that man dooth to his neighebores / in
 body / or in catel [564] Of this cursed synne of Ire /
 cometh eek' manslaughtre ||. And vnderstonde wel / that
 homycide / that is manslaughtre / is in diuerse wise ¶ Som
 manere of homycide is spiritueel / and som is bodily [565]

¶ Of man-
 slaughtre in
 diuerse maneres

¶ Of .vj.
 thynges / þat
 bee / in spiritueel
 manslaughtre
 ¶ Nota secun-
 dum Iohannem
 ¶ Salomon

¶ Spiritueel manslaughtre is in .vj. thynges ¶ first' by
 hate / as seint' Iohn seith /. he that hateth his brother /
 is homycide / [566] ¶ homycide is eek' by bakbitynge / of
 whiche bakbiteres seith Salomon /. that they han two
 swerdes / with whiche / the sleen hire neighebores /. ffor
 soothly / as wikke is / to bynyme his good name / as
 his lyf' [567] ¶ Homycide is eek' / in yeuyng of wikked
 conseil by fraude /. as for to yeuen conseil / to areysen
 wrongful custumes / and taillages /. [568] of whiche seith

¶ Of homycide /
 in yeuyng of
 wikked conseil

¶ Salomon

Salomon ¶ Leon' roryng and Bere hongry / been like to the
 crueel lordshipes / in withholdyng or abreggyng / of the
 shepe / or the hyre or of the wages of seruauntz /. or elles in
 vsures / or in withdrawyng of the Almesse of poure folk'.
 [569] ffor which the wise man seith ¶ ffebeth hym / that'
 almost dyeth for hunger/. for soothly / but if thou feede hym /
 thou sleest hym / and alle thise been deedly synnes [570]

¶ Sapiens

¶ Of bodily man-
 slaughtre

BOdily manslaughtre is / whan thou sleest him with thy
 tonge /. In oother manere /. as whan thou comandest to
 sleen a man / or elles / yeuest' hym conseil / to sleen a

man [571] Manslaughtre in dede / is in .iiij. maneres. ¶ Of manslaughtre in dede. in .iiij. maneres
 ¶ That oon / is by lawe / right as a Iustice dampneth ¶ Of manslaughtre by lawe
 hym that is coupable to the deeth. / but lat the Iustice
 be war/ that he do it rightfully /. and that he do it nat'
 for delit' to spille blood / but' for kepyng of rightwise-
 nesse / [572] ¶ Another homycide / is that' is doon for ¶ Of homycide doon for / necessitee
 necessitee /. as whan o man sleeth another in his defendaunt'
 and þat he ne may noon ootherwise escape / from his
 owene deeth /. [573] but certainly / if he may escape with
 outen manslaughtre of his aduersarie / and sleeth hym /.
 he dooth synne / and he shal bere penance as for deedly
 synne [574] ¶ Eek/ if a man / by caas or auenture / shete ¶ Of homycide / by caas or auenture
 an arwe / or caste a stoon / with which he sleeth a man /
 he is homycide [575] ¶ Eek/ if a womman by necligence / ¶ Of homycide / whan a womman /
 ouerlyeth hire child' in hir slepyng. it is homycide and ouerlieth hir child'
 deedly synne / [576] Eek/ whan man destourbeth con- ¶ Of homycide / in destourbyng/
 cepcion of a child' and maketh a womman / outhere bareyne of/ a child'e.
 by drynkyng venenouse herbes / thurgh which / she may
 nat conceyue /. or sleeth a child by drynkes wilfully or
 elles / putteth certeine material thynges / in hire secree
 places / to slee the child' / [577] or elles / dooth vnkyndely
 synne / by which man or womman shedeth hire nature /
 in manere or in place / ther as a child may nat' be con-
 ceiued /. or elles / if a woman haue conceyued / and hurt'
 hir child / and sleeth the child / yet' it is homycide
 [578] ¶ What seye we eek/ of wommen that mordren ¶ Of wommen þat mordre hir
 hir children for drede of worldly shame /. certes / an children / for
 horrible homicide [579] ¶ Homycide is eek/ if a man ap- worldly shame
 procheth to a womman / by desir of lecherie / thurgh which the ¶ Of homycide
 child is perissed / or elles smyteth a womman wityngly / thurgh the approach-
 thurgh which she leseth hir child' ¶. Alle these been homy- yng of man to
 cides / and horrible deedly synnes [580] Yet comen ther of womman by desir
 of lecherie /. or
 elles thurgh
 smytyng of a
 woman with
 child'e
 ¶ Of many mo
 synnes that
 comen of Ire
 Ire / manye mo synnes /. as wel / in word / as in thoght' and
 in dede / as he that arretteth vpon god /. or blameth god /
 of thyngt. of which he is hym self gilty. / or despiseth
 god / and alle hise halwes / as doon these cursede hasardours

in diuerse contrees ||. [581] This cursed / synne doon they /
 whan they feelen in hir hertes / ful wikkedly of god / and
 of hise halwes [582] ¶ also / whan they treten vnreuerently
 the sacrement/ of the Auter / thilke synne is so greet.
 that vnnethe may it been releessed but that the mercy of
 god / passeth alle hise werkes / it is so greet and he so
 benigne [583] Thanne comth of Ire attry Angre /.
 whan a man / is sharpely amonested in his shrifte to for-
 leten his synne /. [584] thanne wole he be angry and
 answeren hokerly and angrily / and deffenden / or excusen
 his synne / by vnstedefastnesse of his flessĥ /. or elles he
 dide it for to holde compaignye with hise felawes /. or
 elles he seith the fend enticed hym / [585] or elles / he
 dide it for his youthe /. or elles / his compleccioñ is so
 corageous / that he may nat forbere /. or elles it is his
 destinee / as he seith / vnto a certein age /. or elles he
 seith / it cometh hym of gentillesse of hise Auncestres
 and semblable thynges [586] ¶ Alle this manere of folk /
 so wrappen hem in hir synnes /. that they ne wol nat
 deliuere hem self /. ffor soothly / no wight / that excuseth
 hym wilfully of his synne / may nat been deliuered of his
 synne / til that he mekely biknoweth his synne & [587]
 ¶ After this / thanne cometh sweryng. that is expres /
 agayn the comandement of god. and this bifalleth ofte /
 of anger and of Ire ||. [588] God seith: thow shalt nat
 take / the name of thy lord god in veyn / or in ydel / Also
 oure lord Ihesu crist seith by the word of seint Mathew ./.
 [. *no gap in the MS.*] [589] Ne wol ye
 nat swere in alle manere. neither by
 heuene. for it is goddes trone. / ne by erthe /. for it is the
 bench of his feet. ne by Ierusalem /. for it is the Citee of
 a greet kyng. ne by thyn heed / for thou mayst nat
 make. an heer whit ne blak /. [590] but seyeth by youre
 word / ye / ye / and nay / nay And what that is moore /
 it is of yuel seith crist. [591] ffor cristes sake ne swereth
 nat so synfully / in dismembrynge of Crist. by soule.

¶ Of hem þat
 vnreuerently
 treten / the
 sacrement of the
 Auter

¶ Of attry Angre

¶ Of sweryng/

¶ Math. 6. nolite
 iurare omnino

herte. bones. and body ¶ ffor *certes* / it semeth that ye
 thynke / that the cursede Iewes / ne dismembred nat
 ynoughⁿ the *preciousse persone* of crist. but ye dismembre
 hym moore / [592] ¶ And if so be / that the lawe com-
 pelle yow to swere /. thanne rule yow / after the lawe of
 god in youre sweryng^t. as seith Ieremye .4°. c°
 [. *no gap in the MS.*] ¶ Thou
 shalt kepe .iij. condicions Thou shalt swere in trouthe /
 in doom. / and in rightwisesse ||. [593] this is to seyn /
 thou shalt swere sooth /. for euery lesynge is agayns Crist.
 ffor crist is verray trouthe /. And thynk wel this / that
 euery greet swerere / nat compelled lawefully to swere /.
 the wounde shal nat departe from his hous / whil he
 vseth / swich vnleueful sweryng ||. [594] Thou shalt sweren
 eek in doom / whan thou art constreyned by thy domes-
 man / to witnessen the trouthe [595] ¶ Eek¹ thow shalt
 nat swere / for enuye ne for fauour / ne for meede /
 but for rightwisesse / and for declaraciō of it /. to
 the worshiþe of god / and helpyng^t of thynē euene
 cristene /. [596] And therefore / euery man that
 taketh goddes name in ydel /. or falsly swereth with
 his mouth /. or elles taketh on hym the name of crist.
 to be called a cristene man / and lyueth agayns Cristes
 luyunge and his techynge / alle they / taken goddes name
 in ydel / [597] ¶ Looke eek / what seint Peter seith
Actuum .4°. *Non est aliud nomen sub celo &c* ¶ Ther
 nys noon oother name seith seint Peter / vnder heuene
 yeuen to men / in which they mowe be sauēd /. that is to
 seyn / but the name of Ihesu crist [598] ¶ Take kepe eek /
 how that the *precious name* of crist /. as seith seint Paul
 ad Philipenses .2°. *In nomine Ihesu &c* ¶ that in the
 name of Ihesu / euery / knee of heuently creatures /. or
 erthely. or of helle sholden bowe /. for it is / so heigh
 and so worshipful / that the cursede feend in helle / sholde
 tremblen / to heeren it ynempned [599] ¶ Thanne
 semeth it that men þat sweren so horribly / by his

¶ *Iurabis in
 veritate in Iudicio
 & in Iusticia*

¶ How a man
 shal nat swere /
 for enuye / ne for
 fauour / ne for
 meede / but for
 rightwisesse &c.

¶ *sanctus Petrus
 Actuum .4°.*

¶ *Paulus ad
 Philipenses 2°.*

blessed name / that they despise hym moore booldely /
than dide the cursede Iewes / or elles the deuel / that
trembleth whan he heereth his name /

[600] ¶ [N]Ow certes / sith that sweryng. but if it be
lawefully doon is so heighly deffended /. muche worse is
forsweryng falsly /. and yet nedelees

[601] ¶ What seye we eek / of hem / that deliten hem
in sweryng and holden it a gentrie / or a manly dede to
swere grete othes ||. And what of hem / that of verray
vsage ne cesse nat to swere grete othes / al be the cause
nat worth a straw /. certes / it is horrible synne [602]

¶ Swerynge sodeynly with-oute auysement is eek a
synne [603] But lat vs go now to thilke horrible sweryng
of Adiuracioñ and coniuuracioñ / as doon these false En-
chauntours / or Nigromanens / in bacyns ful of water /. or
in a bright swerd. in a Cercle / or in a fir / or in a shulder
boon of a sheepe /. [604] I kan nat seye / but that they
doon cursedly / and damnably agayns crist /. and al the
feith of hooly chirche /

[605] ¶ What seye we of hem / that bileeuen in
diuynails /. as by flight / or by noyse of briddes / or of
beestes. or by sort / by Geomancie. by dremes. by chirkyng
of dores. or crakyng of houses. by gnawyng of rattes.
and swich manere. wrecchednesse. / [606] certes / al this
thyng is deffended by god / and by al hooly chirche /. ffor
which they been acursed / til they come to amendement.

that on swich filthe setten hire bileeue [607] ¶ Charmes
for woundes or maladie of men / or of beestes /. if they
taken any effect. it be perauenture / that god suffreth
it. for folk sholden yeue the moore feith / and reuerence to
his name.

[608] NOW wol I speken of lesynges /. which gener-
ally / is fals signyficacioñ of word / in entente / to deceyuen
his euene cristene [609] ¶ Some lesyng is / of which /
ther comth noon auantage to no wight ||. And som lesyng /
turneth to the ese and profit. of o man / and to disese.

¶ Of hem þat
deliten hem in
sweryng / for
gentrie and of
vsage

¶ Of the sweryng/
of adiuracioñ &
coniuuracioñ

¶ Of hem / þat
bileeuen in
diuynayles

¶ Of charmes for
woundes /
or maladie

¶ Of lesynges

and damage of another man [610] ¶ Another lesyng /
for to sauen his lyf or his catel / [Another lesyng] comth
of delit. for to lye. in which delit / they wol forge a long^t
tale / and peynten it^t with alle circumstaunces where /
al the ground of the tale is fals ||. [611] som lesyng.
comth / for he wole sustene his word ¶ And som lesyng /
comth of recchelesnesse with-ouen auisement. and sem-
blable thynges

[612] Lat^t vs now touche / the vice of flaterynge /. ¶ Of flaterynge
which ne comth nat gladly but for drede /. or for coueitise.

[613] ¶ flaterye is generally wrongful preisynge. ¶ flater- ¶ how flatereres
eres / been the deueles norices / that^t norissen hise children / been the deueles
norices

with Milk^t of losengerie ||. [614] ffor sothe / Salomon seith. ¶ Salomon

that flaterie is wors than detraccion. for som tyme de-
traccion maketh an hauteyn man / be the moore humble /.
for he dredeth detraccion / but certes flaterye / that^t maketh
a man / to enhauncen his herte and his contenaice

[615] ¶ flatereres / been the deueles Enchauntours for ¶ how flatereres /
the make a man to wene of hym self. be lyk / that he been the deueles
enchauntours

nys nat lyk. [616] they been lyk to Iudas / that bitraysed
[God / and thise flatereres bitraysen] a man / to sellen hym

to hise enemy. that is to the deuel [617] ¶ flatereres / been ¶ how flatereres/
the deueles Chapelleyns. / that syngen euere Placebo been the deueles
Chapelleyns

[618] ¶ I rekene fla[te]rie in the vices of Ire. / for ofte
tyme / if o man / be wrooth with another /. thanne wole
he flater som wight. to sustene hym in his querele

[619] Speke we now / of swich cursynge / as comth ¶ Of cursynge
of Irous herte ¶ Malisoñ generally / may be seyde euery þat comth of
Irous herte

maner power or harm ||. swich cursynge / bireueth man fro
the regne of god / as seith seint Paul /. [620] And ofte ¶ Sanctus Paulus

tyme / swich cursynge wrongfully / retorneth agayn / to
hym þat curseth /. as a bryd that retorneth agayn / to his

owene nest [621] ¶ And ouer alle thyng^t men oghten
eschewe to cursen hire children / and yeuen to the deuel
hire engendrure / as ferforth / as in hem is /. certes it is
greet peril and greet synne

¶ Of chidyng
& reproche

[622] Lat vs thanne speken of chidyng and reproche /
 whiche been / ful grete woundes in mannes herte / for
 they vnsowen / the semes of freendshipe in mannes herte
 [623] ¶ ffor certes / vnnethes may a man / pleylnly been
 accorded with hym / that hath hym openly reuyled and
 repreued in disclaundre /. ¶ This is / a ful grisly synne /
 as crist seith in the gospel /. [624] And taak kepe now.
 that he þat repreueth his neighebor /. outhere he repreueth
 hym by som harm of peyne / that he hath on his body /.
 as Mesel / croked harlot. or by som synne that he dooth
 [625] ¶ Now if he repreue hym by harm of peyne /
 thanne turneth the repreue to Ihesu crist. for peyne is
 sent by the rightwys sonde of god / and by his suffrance /
 be it Meselrie or Maheym or maladie [626] ¶ And if he
 repreue hym vncharitably of synne /. as thou dronk-
 elewe harlot and so forth /. thanne aperteneth that/
 to the reioysyng of the deuel /. that euere hath ioie /
 that men doon synne [627] ¶ And certes / chidyng may
 nat come / but out of a vileyns herte ¶ ffor after the
 habundance of the herte / speketh the mouth ful ofte
 [628] ¶ And ye shul vnderstonde that looke by any wey.
 whan any man shal chastise another / that he be war /
 from chidyng and repreuyng /. ffor trewely / but he be
 war he may ful lightly / quyken the fir of Angre and of
 wratthe / which þat he sholde quenche. and per auenture
 sleeth hym / which that he myghte chastise with benig-
 nitee [629] ¶ ffor as seith Salomon ¶ the amyable tonge is
 the tree of lyf. that is to seyn / of lyf espritueel /. and
 soothly. a deslaunce tonge / sleeth the spirites of hym that
 repreueth / and eek of hym that is repreued [630] ¶ loo /
 what seith seint Augustyn || ther is no thyng so lyk the
 deueles child /. as he / that ofte chideth ¶ Seint¹ Paul seith
 eek ||. I seruant of god / bihoueth nat to chide [631] ¶ And
 how þat chidyng / be a vileyns thyng bitwixe alle
 manere folk/. yet is it certes / moost vncouenable /
 bitwixe a man and his wyf /. for there is neuere reste /

¶ Salom.on

¶ sanctus
Augustinus
¶ Sanctus
Paulus

and therefore seith Salomon /. An hous that is vncouered ¶ Salomon
 and droppynge /. and a chidyng wyf been lyke
 [632] ¶ A man that is in a droppynge hous in manye
 places /. though he eschewe the droppynge in o place /
 it droppeth on hym / in another place ¶ So fareth it by ¶ *Nota exemplum*
 a chydyng wyf /. but she chide hym in o place / she
 wol chide hym in anoper [633] ¶ And therefore / bettre is
 a morsel of breed with ioye / than an hous ful of
 delices with chidyng seith Salomon [634] ¶ Seint ¶ Salomon
 Paul seith ¶ O ye wommen / be ye subgetes to youre ¶ *Paulus ad
 Colonienses .3o.*
 housbondes / and ye men / loueth youre wyues.
 Ad Colonienses .3o.

[635] Afterward / speke we of scornynge. which is a ¶ *Of scornynge*
 wikked synne /. and namely / whan he scorneth a man for
 hise goode werkes /. [636] ffor certes / swiche scorneres /
 faren / lyk the foule tode / that may nat endure / to
 smelle / the soote sauour of the vyne / whanne it
 florissiheth [637] ¶ These scorneres / been partyng felawes
 with the deuel. / for they han ioye / whan the deuel
 wyynneth. and sorwe whan he leseth. [638] they been
 Aduersaries of Ihesu crist. for they haten that he loueth.
 that is to seyn / saluacioñ of soule

[639] Speke we now of wikked conseil. for he þat ¶ *Of yeuyng/ of
 wikked conseil*
 wikked conseil yeueth / is a traytour. / he deceyueth
 hym þat trusteth in hym Vt Achitofel ad Absolonem .||.
 But natheles / yet is his wikked conseil first agayn hym
 self /. [640] ffor as seith the wise man. / euery fals
 luyng / hath his *propertee* in hym self/. that he þat
 wole anoye another man. he anoyeth first hym self
 [641] ¶ And men shul vnderstonde / that man shal nat ¶ *Of what folk /
 þat a man shal
 eschuen to taken
 his conseil*
 taken his conseil of fals folk/. ne of angry folk/ or
 greuous folk/ that louen specially / to muchel hir owene
 profit. ne to muche worldly folk' namely / in conseilynge
 of soules

[642] NOW comth the synne of hem that sowen / and ¶ *Of hem that
 sowen and maken
 discorde*
 maken discord amonges folk'. which is a synne / that

Crist hateth outrely /. and no wonder is ¶ for he deyde /
for to make concord. [643] And moore shame do they to
Crist. than dide they / that hym crucifiede / for god
loueth bettre / that freendshipe be amonges folk. than
he dide his owene body. the which that he yaf for vnitee ¶.
Therefore been they likned to the deuel / that euere been
aboute to maken discord

¶ Of the synne of
double tonge

[644] **NOw** comth the synne of double tonge. swiche
as speken faire byforn folk/. and wikkedly bihynde. or
elles / they maken semblant. as though they speeke of
good entencioñ. or elles in game and pley and yet they
speke of wikked entente

¶ Of biwreying
of conseil

[645] **NOw** comth biwreying^t of conseil. thurgh
which/a man is defamed/. certes/vnnethe/may he restooore the
damage

¶ Of Manace

[646] **NOw** comth Manace. that is an open folye /. for
he / that ofte manaceth. he threteth / moore than he may
perfourne / ful ofte tyme

¶ Of ydel wordes

[647] **NOw** cometh ydel wordes. that is with outen
profit of hym that speketh tho wordes. and eek of hym /
that herkneth tho wordes ¶ Or elles ydel wordes / been
tho that been nedeles / or with outen entente of natureel
profit /. [648] And al be it that ydel wordes been som
tyme venial synne. yet sholde men douten hem. for we
shul yeue rekenyng of hem bifore god

¶ Of Ianglynge

[649] **NOw** comth Ianglynge. that may nat been with
oute synne ¶ And as seith Salomon. it is a synne of apert^t
folye /. [650] And therefore / a Philosophre seyde /. whan
men axed hym / how ¹that men sholde plesse the peple :
and he answerde / do manye goode werkes / and spek fewe
Iangles

¶ Salomon.

¶ Philosophus

¶ Of the synne
of Iaperis.

[651] **A**fter this / comth the synne of Iaperes / that
been the deueles Apes. for they maken folk to laughie at
hire Iaperie / as folk doon / at the gawdes of An Ape /,
Swiche Iaperes deffendeth seint Paul. [652] ¶ Looke / how
that vertuose wordes and hooly woordes conforten hem /

that trauaillen / in the seruice of crist. right so conforten
 the vileyns wordes and knakkes of Iaperis. hem that
 trauaillen / in the seruice of the deucl [653] ¶ These been
 the synnes / that comen of the tonge. that comen of Ire /
 and of othere synnes mo 𐀀

¶ *Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Ire* 𐀀

T [654]
 he remedie agayns Ire. is a vertu / that men
 clepen Mansuctude. that is debonairetee /. and
 cek another vertu / þat men callen pacience / or
 suffrance

[655] ¶ Debonairetee / withdraweth and refreyneth ¶ Of debonairetee
 the stirynges and the moeuynge of mannes corage in his
 herte. in swich manere / that they ne skippe nat' out by
 Angre ne by Ire / [656] ¶ Suffrance / suffreth swetely / alle ¶ Of Suffrance
 the anoyaunces and þe wronges / that men doon / to man
 outward [657] ¶ Seint Ierome seith thus of debonairetee. ¶ Sanctus
 that it dooth noon harm to no wight' ne seith. ne for noon Ieronimus
 harm that men doon or seyn. he ne eschawfeth nat'
 agayns his resoñ [658] ¶ This vertu som tyme comth of
 nature /. ffor as seith the Philosophre. A man is a quyk' ¶ Philosophus
 thyng' by nature. debonaire and trefable to goodnesse.
 but whan debonairetee / is enformed of grace / thanne is
 it' the moore worth

[659] ¶ Pacience / that is another remedie. Agayns Ire. ¶ Of Pacience
 it is a vertu that suffreth swetely euery mannes goodnesse /
 and is nat wrooth for noon harm / that is doon to hym
 [660] ¶ The philosophre seith / that pacience is thilke ¶ Philosophus
 vertu / that suffreth debonairely alle the outrages of
 Aduersitee / and euery wikked word [661] ¶ This vertu /
 maketh a man lyk' to god / and maketh hym / goddes
 owene deere child' / as seith Crist. this vertu disconfiteth
 thyn enemy ¶ And therefore seith the wise man. / If thou ¶ Nota secundum
 wolt venquysse thyn enemy / lerne to suffre / [662] And sapientem
 thou shalt vnderstonde / that man suffreth iiij. manere ¶ Of iiij. manere
 of greuances. that

man suffreth in of greuances in outward thynges. agayns the whiche .iiij.
outwarde thynges. he moot haue / .iiij manere of paciencis

¶ The firste
greuance

[663] ¶ The firste greuance / is of wikkede wordes /
thilke suffrede Ihesu crist. with-outen grucchyng' ful
patiently. whan the Iewes despised and repreued hym

¶ Remedium

ful ofte [664] ¶ suffre thou therefore patiently. for the

¶ Nota de
sapiente

wise man seith /. If thou stryue with a fool / though
the fool be wrooth / or though he laughe. algate /

¶ The .iiij.^{de}
greuance
¶ Remedium

thou shalt haue no reste [665] ¶ That oother greuance
outward. is to haue damage of thy catel ¶ Ther agayns

¶ The .iiij.^{de}
greuance
¶ Remedium

suffred crist ful patiently. whan he was despoyled / of al
that he hadde in this lyf. and that nas but hise clothes /

¶ The .iiij.^{de}
greuance

[666] ¶ The thridde greuance is / a man to haue harm in
his body ¶ That suffred crist. ful patiently in al his

¶ The .iiij.^{de}
greuance

passiō [667] ¶ The fourthe greuance /. is in outrageous
labour / in werkes. Wherefore I seye that folk/ that

¶ Remedium

maken hir seruantz to trauaillen. to greuously / or out' of
tyme. as on haly dayes / soothly / they do greet' synne

[668] Heer agayns suffred Crist' ful patiently / and
taughte vs pacience /. whan he baar ¹vp-on his blissed

shulder / the croys / vp-on which / he sholde suffren
despitous death [669] ¶ Heere may men lerne to be

patient/. for certes noght oonly cristen men been patient.
for loue of Ihesu crist' / and for gerdoñ / of the blisful

lyf / that is perdura[b]le. but certes the olde payens that
neuere were cristene / commendeden and vseden the vertu

of pacience

¶ Nota de in-
paciencia cuius-
dam Philosophi
contra suum
discipulum

[670] A Philosophre vp-on a tyme that wolde haue
beten his disciple for his grete trespas for which he was
greetly amoued and broghte a yerde to scoure with the

child. [671] and whan this child saugh the yerde. he
seyde to his maister. what thenke ye do s' / I. wol bete

thee quod the maister for thy correccion [672] ¶ ffor sothe
quod the child / ye oghten first' correcte youre self /. that

han lost al youre pacience / for the gilt of a child
[673] ¶ ffor sothe quod the maister al wepyng the

seyst' sooth / haue thow the yerde my deere sone and
 correcte me / for myn inpacience [674] Of pacience comth ¶ how Obedience
 Obedience / thurgh which a man is obedient to Crist. and comth of
 to alle hem to whiche he oghte to been obedient' in Crist
 [675] ¶ And vnderstond wel that obedience is *perfit*.
 whan that a man dooth gladly and hastily with good
 herte entierly al that he sholde do [676] ¶ Obedience
 generally / is to *perfourne* the doctrine of god and
 of his souereyns to whiche / hym oghte to ben obeisaunt'
 in alle rightwisnesse 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀

¶ Sequitur de Accidia 𐀀

A [677]
 fter the synne of Enuye and of Ire. now wol I
 speken of the synne of Accidie. for Enuye /
 blyndeth the herte of man and Ire troubleth
 a man. and Accidie maketh hym heuy thoughtful and
 wrawful [678] Enuye and Ire maken bitternesse in herte.
 which bitternesse is mooder of Accidie and bynymeth hym
 the loue of alle goodnesse. thanne is Accidie / the
 Angwissē of troubled herte And seint Augustyn seith. / ¶ *sanctus*
 it is anoy of goodnesse and ioye of harm [679] ¶ Certes Augustinus
 this is a dampnable synne. for it dooth wrong' to Ihesu
 crist. in as muche as it bynymeth the seruice / that men
 oghte doon to crist' with alle diligence / as seith Salomon. / ¶ Salomon
 [680] but Accidie / dooth no swich diligence. He dooth
 alle thyng with anoy / and with wrawnesse / slaknesse /
 and excusaciōn / and with ydelnesse / and vnlust'. ffor
 which the book seith ||. Acursed be he that dooth the
 seruice of god negligently [681] ¶ Thanne is Accidie / ¶ *Nota & caue*
 enemy / to euerich estaat of man. for *certes* / the estaat of
 man / is in .iiij. maneres [682] ¶ Outher it is / thestaat of ¶ Of .iiij. maneres
 Innocence. as was thestaat of Adam / biforn that he fil into of estates of man
 synne. in which estaat' he was holden to wirche / as in ¶ Of thestaat/ of
 heriyng and adowryng of god [683] ¶ Another estaat'. ¶ Of thestaat/ of
 is estaat of synful men. in which estaat' men been holden synful men

to labour in preyinge to god. for amendement of hire synnes. and that he wole graunte hem to alysen out of hir synnes / [684] ¶ Another estaat is thestaat of grace. in which estaat he is holden to werkes of penitence. and *certes* / to alle these thynges is Accidie enemy and contrarie. ffor he loueth no bisynesse at al [685] ¶ Now *certes* this foule swyn Accidie. is eek a ful greet enemy to the lifode of the body. for it ne hath no *purueance* agayn temporeel necessitee. for it forsleweth and forsluggeth. and destroyeth alle goodes temporeles / by ¹recchelesnesse

¶ Of thestaat of grace

¶ How Accidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle

[686] The fourthe thyng is. that Accidie is lyk to hem that been in the peyne of helle. by cause of hir slouthe and of hire heuynesse for they that been dampned / been so bounde. that they ne may neither wel do / ne wel thynke [687] ¶ Of Accidie comth first that a man is anoyed and encombred for to doon any goodnesse. and maketh / that god hath abhomynacion of swich Accidie

¶ Of the synne of slouthe

[688] NOW comth slouthe. that wol nat suffre noon hardnesse ne no penaunce. ffor soothly / Slouthe is so tendre. and so delicaat as seith Salomon / that he wol nat suffre / noon hardnesse ne penaunce. and therefore / he

¶ Salomon

¶ Remedie agayn slouthe

shendeth / al that he dooth [689] ¶ Agayns this rothenerted synne of Accidie and slouthe / sholde men exercise hem self to doon goode werkes. and manly and *vertuously* cacchen corage wel to doon. thynkyng that oure lord Ihesu crist. quiteth euery good dede / be it neuer so lite. / [690] vsage of labour / is a greet thyng. for it maketh as seith seint Bernard the laborer / to haue stronge armes / and harde synwes. and slouthe maketh hem feble and tendre [691] Thanne comth drede to bigynne to werke anye goode werkes. for *certes* / he that is enclyned to synne. hym thynketh / it is so greet an emprise / for to vndertake to doon werkes of goodnesse. [692] and casteth in his herte / that the

¶ Nota secundum Bernardum

¶ Of drede / to bigynnen anye goode werkes

circumstañces of goodnesse been so greuouse and so chargeaunt for to suffre. that he dar nat vndertake / to do werkes of goodnesse / as seith seint Gregorie

¶ Gregorius

[693] NOW comth wanhope. that is despeir of the mercy of god. þat comth somtyme / of to muche outrageous sorwe. and somtyme / of to muche drede. ymaginyng that he hath doon so muche synne / that it wel nat auailen hym. though he wolde repenten hym and forsake synne /. [694] thurgh which despeir/ or drede / he abandoneth al his herte to euery maner synne as seith seint Augustin. [695] Which dampnable synne / if that it continue vn-to his ende / it is cleped synnyng in the hooly goost [696] ¶ This horrible synne is so perilous. that he þat is despeired ther nys no felonye / ne no synne that he douteth for to do. as sheweth wel by Iudas [697] ¶ Certes abouen alle synnes / thanne is this synne moost displeasnt to Crist and moost Aduersarie [698] ¶ Soothly. he that despeireth hym / is lyke the coward champion recreant [.

¶ Of the synne of wanhope

¶ Sanctus Augustinus

. *no gap in the MS.*]

and nedelees despeired ||. [699] Certes / the mercy of god / is euere redy to euery penitent. and is abouen alle hise werkes [700] ¶ Allas / kan a man nat bithynke hym / on the gospel of seint Luc .15. where as Crist seith /. that as wel shal ther be Ioye in heuene vpon a synful man that dooth penitence. than vp on 90 and .19. rightful men / that [. *no gap in the MS.*] neden no penitence [701]

¶ Luca in Euaungelio

¶ Looke forther in the same gospel. the ioye / and the feeste of the goode man that hadde lost his sone. whan his sone with repentañce. was retourned to his fader [702] ¶ kan they nat remembren hem eek/. that as seith seint Luc .23. how that the thief that was hanged

¶ In eodem Euaungelio

bisyde Ihesu crist. seyde. Lord remembre of me. whan thow comest in to thy regne [703] ¶ ffor sothe. [seyde] Crist. I seye to thee. to day shaltow been with me in Paradys [704] ¶ Certes ther is noon so horrible synne of

¶ Nota secundum Lucam de latrone / suspenso cum christo

¶ Nota

man / that it ne may in his lyf be destroyed by penitence.
thurgh^h vertu of the passion / and of the deeth of Crist ||.

[705] Allas / what nedeth man thanne to been despeired.
sith þat his. mercy / so redy is and large. / Axe and haue

[706] Thanne cometh Sompnolence / that is sloggy
slombrynge. which maketh a man be ¹heuy and dul / in
body and in soule. And this synne comth of Slouth

[707] And certes / the tyme that by wey of resoñ men
sholde nat slepe. that is by [the morwe] but if ther were
cause resonable. / [708] ffor soothly / the morwe tyde is
moost^t couenable a man to seye hise preyeres / and for
to thynken on god / and for to honoure god. and to
yeuen Almesse to the poure. that first^t cometh in the name

of Crist. [709] Lo what seith Salomon ¶ Who so wolde
by the morwe awaken and seke me / he shal fynde

[710] Thanne cometh Necligence / or recchelesnesse /
that rekketh of no thyng/. And how that Ignorañce be
mooder of alle harm. / certes Necligence is the norice
[711] ¶ Necligence ne dooth no fors / whan he shal doon
a thyng^t. Whether he do it weel or baddely

[712] Of the remedie of these two synnes. as seith
the wise man /. that he that dredeth god / he spareth nat
to doon that *him* oghte doon /. [713] and he that loueth
god / he wol doon diligence to plesse god by hise werkes /
and abaundone hym self^t with al his myght^t wel for to doon

[714] Thanne comth ydelnesse. that is the yate of alle
harmes / ¶ An ydel man / is lyk^t to a place that hath no
walles. the deueles may entre on euery syde and sheten
at hym at discouert^t by temptacion. on euery syde

[715] ¶ This ydelnesse is the thurrok^t of alle^{sp} wikked and
vileyns thoghtes / and of alle Iangles / trufles / and of
alle ordure [716] ¶ Certes / the heuene is yeuen to hem that
wol labouren and nat to ydel folk^t ¶ Eek Dauid seith /

that they ne been nat in the labour of men ne they shul
nat been whipped with men / that is to seyn in purgatorie /

¶ Of Sompno-
lence

¶ Salomon

¶ Of Necligence /
or recchelesnesse

¶ Of the remedie
ayens Necligence
and reccheles-
nesse.
secundam
Sapientem

¶ Of ydelnesse

¶ Dauid

[717] certes thanne semeth it. they shul be tormented
with the deuel in helle but if they doon penitence

[718] Thanne comth the synne that men clepen ¶ Of the synne
Tarditas. as whan a man is to laterede / or tariynge er ¶at men clepen
Tarditas
he wole turne to god /. and certes / that is a greet folie.
He is lyk/ to hym that falleth in the dych. and wol nat
arise ./ [719] And this vice / comth of a fals hope. that
he thynketh / that he shal lyue longe. but that hope /
faileþ ful ofte /

[720] Thanne comth lachesse. that is he / that whan he ¶ Of the synne
biginneth any good werk/. anon he shal forleten it and
stynten / as doon they / that han any wight to gouerne /
and ne taken of hym namoore kepe anon as they fynden
any contrarie or any anoy [721] ¶ These been the newe
sheepherdes / that leten hir sheepe wityngly go renne to
the wolf / that is in the breres / or do no fors of hir owene
gouernañce [722] of this / comth pouerte and destruccioñ.
bothe of spirituel / and temporeel thynges Thanne comth
a manere cooldnesse / that freseth al the herte of a man / ¶ Of cooldnesse
[723] Thanne comth vndeucioñ thurgh which a man is ¶ of a mannes herte
blent as seith Seint Bernard. and hath swich langour in ¶ Of vndeucioñ
soule. that he may neither rede ne singe in hooly chirche /
ne heere / ne thynke of no deuocioñ / ne trauaille with
hise handes in no good werk. that it nys hym vnsauory
and al apalled [724] ¶ thanne wexeth he slough and
slombry and soone wol be wrooth / and soone is enclined
to hate and to enuye [725] Thanne comth the synne of ¶ Of worldly
worldly sorwe. / which as is cleped tristicia. that sleeth
man / as seint Paul seith / [726] ffor certes swich sorwe / ¶ Sanctus
werketh to the deeth of the soule and of the body also / Paulus
for ther-of comth ¶at a man is anoyed of his owene lif.
[727] wherfore swich sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lif of
man. er ¶at his tyme be come by wey of kynde 卐

¹¶ *Remedium contra peccatum Accidie* ∞
[728]

Agayns this horrible synne of Accidie. and the branches of the same. ther is a vertu / that is called fortitudo. or strengthe / that is an affeccioñ / thurgñ which / a man despiseth anoyouse things [729] ¶ This vertu is so myghty and so vigerous. that it dar withstonde myghtily and wisely kepen hym self fro perils that been wikked. and wrastle agayn the assautes of the deuel. [730] for it enhaunceth and enforceth the soule right as Accidie abateth it' and maketh it fieble. / ffor this fortitudo may endure by long suffrañce / the trauailles that been couenable

[731] ¶ This vertu / hath manye spesces. and the firste / is cleped Magnificence. that is to seyn greet corage. for certes ther bihoueth greet corage agains Accidie / lest that it ne swolwe the soule by the synne of sorwe / or destroye it' by wanhope [732] ¶ This vertu maketh folk / to vndertake harde thynges and grououse thynges / by hir owene wil / wesely and resonably ||. [733] And for as muchel / as the deuel fighteth agayns a man. moore by queyntise and by sleighte. than by strengthe. therfore men shal withstonden hym by wit and by resoñ and by discrecioñ [734] Thanne arn ther the vertues of feith and hope in god and in hise seintes to achue and acomplise the goode werkes / in the whiche / he purposeth fermely to continue [735] Thanne comth seuretee / or sikernesse. and that' is. whan a man / ne douteth no trauaille in tyme comyng / of the goode werkes / that a man hath bigonne

¶ Of Magnanim-
itee

¶ Of the vertues
of feith and hope

¶ Of Magnificence

¶ Of Constaunce

[736] Thanne comth Magnificence / that' is to seyn / whan a man dooth and perfourneth grete werkes of goodnesse and that is the ende / why that men sholde do goode werkes. for in the acomplissyng of grete goode werkes / lith the grete gerdoñ [737] Thanne is ther Constañce. that is stablenesse of corage. and this sholde been in herte / by stedefast feith. and in mouth / and in

berynge / and in chiere and in dede [738] Eke ther been
 mo speciale remedies agains Accidie in diuerse werkes / ¶ Of mo speciale
 and in consideracioñ of the peynes of helle and of the remedies agayns
 ioyes of heuene / and in trust' of the grace of the holy Accidie
 goost' that wole yeue hym myght' to perfourne his goode
 entente 𐞀.

¶ Sequitur de Auaricia 𐞀

A [739]
 fter Accidie / wol I speke of Auarice and of
 Coueitise / of which synne seith seint Paule ¶ Sanctus Paulus
 that the roote of alle harmes is Coueitise. Ad
 Thimotheum .6°. [740] ffor soothly whan the herte of a
 man. is confounded in it self' and troubled' and that the
 soule / hath lost the confort' of god. thanne seketh he an
 ydel solas of worldly thynges /

[741] Auarice / after the descripcion of seint Augustyn. ¶ What Auarice
 is likerousnesse in herte to haue erthely thynges. is *secundum*
 Augustinum

[742] ¶ Som oother folk seyn / that Auarice / is. for to
 purchacen manye erthely thynges. and no thyng' yeue
 to hem that han nede / [743] ¶ And vnderstood / that
 Auarice / ne stant' nat oonly in lond ne catel but som-
 tyme / in science and in glorie. and in euery manere of
 outrageous thyng' is Auarice and Coueitise / [744] ¶ And
 the difference bitwixe Auarice and Coueitise is this ¶ Of the differ-
 ¶ Coueitise / is for to coueite swiche thynges as thou ence / bitwixe
 hast nat ||. And Auarice / is for to withholde and kepe swiche Anarice and
 thynges as thou hast' with-oute rightful nede [745] ¶ soothly Coueitise
 this Auarice is a synne / that is ful dampnable. for al hooly
 writ' curseth it / and speketh agayns that vice. for it dooth
 wrong' to Ihesu crist. [746] for it bireueth hym the loue
 that men to hym owen / and turneth it bakward' agayns
 alle resoñ. [747] and maketh that the Auaricious man /
 hath moore hope in his catel / than in Ihesu crist' and
 dooth moore obseruance in keypyng of his tresor / than
 he dooth to seruice of Ihesu crist. [748] And therefore seith

Paulus ad
Ephesios .5°.

seint Paul ad Ephesios 5°. that an Auaricious man / is
the thraldom of ydolatrie

¶ Of the differ-
ence bitwix an
ydolastre and
an auaricious
man

[749] ¶ What difference / is bitwixe an ydolastre / and
an Auaricious man? but that an ydolastre *per auenture* /
ne hath but o Mawmet^r or two / and the Auaricious man
hath manye. ffor *certes* / euery floryn in his cofre is his
Mawmet/. [750] And *certes* the synne of Mawmettrie is
the firste thyng^r that God deffended in the ten comaund-

¶ Exodi *capitulo*.
20°

mentz as bereth witnessse Exodi *capitulo* .20° [751] ¶ Thou
shalt haue no false goddes bifore me / ne thou shalt make
to thee no graue thyng^r. thus is an Auaricious man that
loueth his tresor biforn god an ydolastre / [752] thurgh

¶ Of Coueitise

this cursed synne of Auarice Of Coueitise comen these
harde lordshipes / thurgh whiche men been distreyned
by taylages / custumes and cariages / moore than hire
duetee or resoñ is / And eek they taken of hire bonde
men *Amercimentz*. whic[h]e myghten moore resonably ben
cleped extorcions than *Amercimentz* [753] ¶ Of whiche
Amercimentz and raunsonyng of bondemen / *somme*
lordes stywardes / seyn that it is rightful. for as muche as
a cherl / hath no temporeel thyng^r that it ne is his lordes /
as they seyn / [754] but *certes* these lordshipes doon
wrong^r that bireuen hire bonde folk. thynges that they
neuere yaue hem /. *Augustinus de civitate*. libro. 9°. [755]

¶ *Augustinus de*
civitate. libro. 9°.

¶ Sooth is / þat the condicioñ of thraldom and the firste
cause of thraldom is for synne *genesis* 9°.

¶ *genesis* .9°.

[756] ¶ Thus may ye seen that the gilt^r disserueth
thraldom / but nat nature /. [757] wherfore these lordes
ne sholde nat muche glorifien hem in hir lordshipes /
sith that by natureel condicioñ they been nat lordes of
thralles. but that thraldom comth first^r by the desert of
synne [758] ¶ And forther ouer / ther as the lawe seith /
that temporeel goodes of boonde folk. been the goodes
of hir lordshipes. ye that is for to vnderstonde. the goodes
of the Emperour / to deffenden hem in hir right. but nat
for to robben hem ne reuen hem [759] ¶ And therefore

seith Seneca ¶ thy prudence sholde lyue benignely with ¶ Seneca
thy thralles /. [760] thilke þat thou clepest thy thralles
been goddes peple. for humble folk/. been cristes freendes /
they been contubernyal with the lord /

[761] ¶ Thynk' eek / that of swich seed as cherles
spryngeth. of swich seed spryngen lordes. As wel may
the cherl be saued as the lord. [762] the same deeth þat
takeþ the cherl. swich deeth taketh the lord. wherfore I
rede / do right' so with thy cherl. as thou woldest' that ¶ Nota
thy lord dide with thee if thou were in his plit/.
[763] euery synful man / is a cherl to synne I rede
thee certes that thou lord werke in swiche wise with
thy cherles. that they rather loue thee than drede / [764]
I woot wel ther is degree aboue degree. as reson
is and skile it' is that' men do hir deuoir/ ther as it is due /
but certes extorcions and ¹despit of youre vnderlynges / is
dampnable /

[765] ¶ And forther ouer vnderstood wel / that thise
Conquerours / or tirauntz / maken ful ofte thralles of
hem that been born / of as roial blood as been they that
hem conqueren / [766] ¶ This name of thraldom / was ¶ Genesis || Male-
neuere erst kowth. til that' Noe seyde / that his sone ^{dictus} Canaan
Canaan sholde be thral to hise bretheren for his synne ^{seruus seruorum}
erit/ fratribus
suis

[767] ¶ What seye we thanne / of hem that pilen and doon ¶ Of hem þat
extorcions in hooly chirche? / ¶ Certes / the swerd that ^{pilen & doon}
extorcions in hooly chirche
men yeuen first' to a knyght' whan he is newe dubbed /
signifieth / that he sholde deffenden hooly chirche / and
nat robben it' ne pilen it /. and who so dooth is traitour

to Crist [768] ¶ And as seith seint Augustyn / they been ¶ sanctus
the deuces wolues that stranglen the sheepe of Ihesu ^{Augustinus}
crist'. and doon worse than wolues. [769] ffor soothly /
whan the wolf' hath ful his wombe / he stynteth to
strangle sheepe. / but soothly / the pilours and destroy-
ours of goddes hooly chirche / ne do nat so / for they ne
stynte neuere to pile [770] ¶ NOW as I haue seyde / sith so
is / that synne / was first' cause of thraldom. thanne is it

thus. / that thilke tyme that al this world was in synne. thanne was al this world in thraldom and subieccioñ [771] ¶ but certes / sith the time of grace cam / god ordeyned that som folk' sholde be moore heigh in estaat. and in degree. and som folk moore lough. and that cuerich / sholde be serued in his estaat. [. . . *no gap in MS.*] [772] and therefore / in somme contrees ther they byen thralles. whan they han turned hem to the feith. they maken hire thralles free out of thraldom. And therefore certes / the lord oweth to his man. that the man oweth to his lord ||. [773] the Pope calleth hym-self' seruant' of the seruañtz of god. / but for as muche as the estaat of hooly chirche. ne myghte nat han be / ne the communo-profit' myghte nat han be kept. ne pees and reste in erthe / but if god hadde ordeyned that som men hadde hyer degree and som men lower/ [774] therefore / was souereyntee ordeyned / to kepe and mayntene and defenden hire vnderlynges or hire subgetz in resoñ / as ferforth as it lith in hire power/. and nat to destroyen hem. ne confounde [775] ¶ Wherfore I seye / that thilke lordes that been lyk wolues that' deuouren the possessionis or the catel of poure folk' wrongfully with-uten mercy or mesure / [776] they shul receyuen by the same mesure that they han mesured to poure folk/ the mercy of Ihesu crist' but if it be amended [777] ¶ NOW comth deceite / bitwixe Marchañt and Marchant' ¶ And thow shalt' vnderstonde that marchandise / is in manye maneres. that oon is bodily and that oother is goostly. that oon is honeste and leueful. and that oother is deshoneste and vnleueful. [778] Of thilke bodily marchandise that is leueful and honeste. is this /. that there as god hath ordeyned that' a regne or a contree / is suffisañt' to hym self/. thanne is it honeste and leueful. that of habundaunce of this contree. that men helpe another contree that is moore nedy /. [779] And therefore / ther moote been Marchantz to bryngen fro that o contree to that oother / hire march-

¶ Eadem mensura &c

¶ Of deceite / bitwixe Marchaunt and Marchant/

¶ Of bodily marchandise that is leueful & honeste

andises [780] ¶ That oother marchandise that men
 haunten with fraude and trecherie and deceite. with
 lesynges and false othes / is cursed and dampnable
 [781] **E**spirituel marchandise / is proprely Symonye /. ¶ Of spirituel
 that is ententif desir/ to byen thyng^t spirituel. that is // that is Symonye
 thyng^t that aperteneth to the Seintuarie of god / and to
 cure of the soule [782] ¶ this desir/ if so be that a
 man do his diligence to parfournen it. al be it^t that his
 desir ne take noon ¹effect. yet is it to hym a deedly
 synne / and if he be ordred / he is irréguleer [783] **C**ertes
 Symonye / is cleped of Simon Magus / that wolde han ¶ Of whom
 boghit^t for temporeel catel. the yifte that god hadde yeuen ^{Symonye bereth}
 his name
 by the hooly goost. to seint Peter and to the Apostles ||
 [784] And therefore vnderstood^t that bothe he that
 selleth and he that beyeth thynges spirituels / been ¶ Of diuerso
 cleped^t Symonyals. be it by catel. be it^t by *procurynge* / ^{maneres of}
^{symonye}
 or by flesshly preyere of hise freendes / flesshly freendes /
 or spirituel freendes [785] ¶ flesshly in two maneres /
 As by kynrede / or othere freendes. soothly if they praye
 for hym that is nat worthy and able / it is Symonye. if he
 take the benefice. / and if he be worthy and able / ther
 nys noon [786] ¶ That oother manere is / whan a man or ¶ Of another
 womanan preyen for folk^t to auuncen hem oonly / for ^{manere of}
^{Symonye}
 wikked flesshly affeccioñ that they have vn-to the persone
 and that is foul Symonye [787] ¶ but *certes* in seruice /
 for which men yeuen thynges spirituels vn-to hir
 seruantz. it moot been vnderstonde / þat the seruice /
 moot been honeste / and elles nat. and eek / that it be
 with-uten bargaynyng. and that the persone be able.
 [788] for as seith Seint Damasic ¶ Alle the synnes of the ¶ ^{sanctus}
^{damasius}
 world / at regard of this synne / arn as thyng^t of noghit.
 for it is the gretteste synne that may be. after the synne
 of Lucifer and Antecrist. [789] for by this synne / god
 forleseth / the chirehe and the soule that he boghite with
 his precious blood / by hem þat yeuen chirches to hem
 that been nat digne. [790] for they putten in theues that

stelen the soules of Ihesu crist and destroyen his patri-
 moyne ||. [791] by swiche vndigne preestes and Curates /
 han lewed men the lasse reuerence of the sacramentz of
 hooly chirche. and swiche yeueres of chirches putten out
 the children of Crist /. and putten in to the chirche the
 deueles owene sone. [792] they sellen the soules /
 that lambes sholde kepen to the wolf that stranglenth
 hem /. And therefore / shul they neuere han part
 of the pasture of lambes / that is the blisse of
 heuene [793] **N**OW comth / hasardrie with hise apur-
 tenañces. as tables and Rasles. of which / comth deceite.
 false othes. chidynges. and alle rauynes. blasphemynge
 and rencyng of god. and hate of hise neighebores. wast
 of goodes. mysspendynge of tyme. and somtyme man-
 slaughtre. ||. [794] Certes / hasardours ne mowe nat been
 with-uten greet synne [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] [795] **O**f
 Auarice / comen eek lesynges. thefte. fals witness. and false
 othes ||. And yeshul vnderstonde that thise been grete synnes.
 and expres agayn the comaundementz of god as I haue
 seyð [796] ¶ fals witness. is in word and eek in dede
 ¶ In word / as for to bireue thy neighebores goode name
 by thy fals witnessyng. or bireuen hym his catel or his
 heritage. by thy fals witnessyng. whan thou for Ire / or
 for meede. or for enuye. berest fals witness / or accusest
 hym or excusest hym by thy fals witness. or elles ex-
 cusest thy self falsly. [797] ware yow questemongeres and
 Notaries ¶ Certes. for fals witnessyng was Susanna in ful
 gret sorwe and peyne. and many another mo / [798] ¶ The
 synne of thefte is eek expres agayns goddes heeste. and in
 two maneres / corporeel. or espritueel. [799] [Corporeel]
 as for to take thy neighebores catel agayn his wyl
 be it by force or by sleighte. be it by Met or by mesure.
 [800] By stelyng eek of false enditementz vpon hym. and
 in borwyng of thy neighebores catel. in entente neuere
 to payen it agayn and semblable thynges / [801] ¶ Es-
 pitruel thefte / is Sacrilege. that / is to seyn / hurt-

¶ Of hasardrye
with hise apur-
tenañces

¶ How of
Auarice. comen.
lesynges. fals
witness. and
false othes.

¶ Of fals witness

¶ Of the synne
of thefte
¶ Of thefte
corporeel

¶ Of thefte
espirituel

ynge of hooly thynges. or of thynges sacred to crist in two maneres. by reson of the hooly place. as chirches or chirche hawes. [802] for which euery vileyns synne that men doon in swiche places / may be cleped sacrilege. or euery violence in the semblable places / ¶ Also / they that withdrawn falsly / the rightes that longen to hooly chirche [803] ¶ And pleyntly and generally .sacrilege. is / to reuen hooly thyng/ fro hooly place /. or vnholly thyng' out/ of hooly place. / or hooly thing' out of vnholly place

¶ Releuacio contra peccatum Auaricie ☉

N [804] Ow shul ye vnderstonde. that the releuyng of Auarice. is Misericorde and pitee largely taken /

And men myghten axe. why that Misericorde and pitee. ¶ Of Misericorde & pitee

is releuyng of Auarice [805] ¶ Certes / the Auaricious man / sheweth no pitee ne Misericorde to the nedeful man / for he deliteth hym in the keypyng of his tresor. and nat' in the rescowyng ne releuyng of his euene cristene. and therfore speke I first' of Misericorde / [806] ¶ Thanne is Misericorde / as seith the Philosophie.

¶ What Misericorde is secundum Philosophum

a vertu / by which the corage of man is stired by the mysese of hym that is mysessed /. [807] vp-on which Misericorde folweth pitee in parfournyng of charitable werkes of Misericorde [808] And certes these thynges /

moeuen a man to Misericorde of Ihesu crist. that he yaf hym self for oure gilt. and suffred deeth for Misericorde / and forgaf vs oure originale synnes. [809] and therby releessed vs fro the peynes of helle. and amenused the peynes of Purgatorie by penitence and yeueth grace wel to do / and atte laste the blisse of heuene / [810] The spesces of Misericorde been. as for to lene and for to yeue /. and to foryeuen and releesse. and for to han

¶ Of thynges / that sholde moeue a man to Misericorde

pitoe in herte and compassion of the meschief' of his

¶ Of the spesces of Misericorde

¶ Of another
remedie agayn
Auarice

eueue cristene. And eek to chastise there as nede is /
[811] ¶ Another manere of remedie agayns Auarice / is
resonable largesse / but soothly heere bihoueth the con-
sideracioñ of the grace of Ihesu crist' and of hise
temporeel goodes / and eek' of the goodes *perdurables*
that crist yaf to vs. [812] and to han remembrance / of
the deeth that he shal receyue. he noot whanne. where. no
how /. and eek' that he shal forgon al that he hath.
sauce only / that he hath despended in goode werkes.

¶ Of fool largesse

[813] ¶ But for as muche as som folk been vnmesur-
able. men oughen eschue fool largesse that men
clepen wast / [814] ¶ Certes / he that is fool large ne
yeueth nat his catel / but he leseth his catel ||. Soothly /
what thyng' that he yeueth for veyne glorie. as to
Mynstrals and to folk /. for to beren his renoun in the
world. he hath synne ther-of and noon Almesse.
[815] certes he leseth foule his good. that ne seketh
with the yifte of his good / no thyng' but synne.
[816] He is lyk / to an hors that seketh. rather to drynken
drouy or trouble water / than for to drynken water of the
clere welle. / [817] And for as muchel as they yeuen. ther
as they sholde nat yeuen. to hem aperteneth thilke
malisoñ / that crist shal yeuen at the day of doome / to
hem / that shullen been dampned 𐞀 𐞀 𐞀

¹Sequitur de gulâ

¶ What Glotonye
is

[818]
After Auarice comth Glotonye / which is expres eek'
agayn the comandement of god ¶ Glotonye / is
vnmesurable Appetit' to ete or to drynke / or elles
to doon ynogh to the vnmesurable Appetit' and desordeyneo
coueitise to eten or to drynke. [819] ¶ This synne cor-
rumped al this world. as is wel shewed / in the synne of
Adam and of Eue ¶ Looke eek / what seith seint Paul of
Glotonye [820] ¶ Manye seith seint Paul goon / of whiche

¶ Sanctus
Paulus

I haue ofte seyde to yow. and now I seye it wepyng /
that been the enemyes of the croys of Crist. of
whiche the ende is deeth. and of whiche / hire wombe is
hire god and hire glorie / in confusiō of hem / that so
deuouren erthely thynges [821] ¶ He that is vsaūt / to
this synne of Glotonye / he ne may no synne withstonde.

he moot been in seruage of alle vices. for it is the deueles
hoord / ther he hideth hym and resteth [822] ¶ This
synne hath manye spesces ¶ The firste / is dronkenesse.

¶ Of the spesces
of Glotonye
¶ The firste spesce
of Glotonye

that is the horrible sepulture of mannes resoñ. and ther-
fore / whan a man is dronken / he hath lost his resoñ. and
this is deedly synne [823] ¶ But soothly. whan that a
man is nat wont to strong drynke. and perauenture / ne
knoweth nat the strengthe of the drynke. or hath feblesse
in his heed. or hath trauailed. thurgh which he drynketh
the moore. al be he sodeynly caught with drynke / it is no

deedly synne / but venyal [824] ¶ The seconde spece of
Glotonye is. that the spirit of a man / wexeth al trouble.
for dronkenesse bireueth hym the discreciō of his wit

¶ The .iiij.^{de} spesce
of Glotonye

[825] ¶ The thridde. spece of Glotonye. is whan a man
deuoureth his mete. and hath no rightful manere of etynge

¶ The .iiij.^{de} spesce
of Glotonye

[826] ¶ The fourthe is. whan thurgh the grete habund-
aunce of his mete. the humours in his body / been des-
tempred [827] ¶ The fifthe. is foryetelnesse by to muchel

¶ The .iiij.^{de} spesce
of Glotonye

drynkyng. for which somtyme a man foryeteth er the
morwe. what he dide at euen. or on the nyght biforn

¶ The .v.^{de} spesce
of Glotonye

[828] ¶ In oother manere been distinct the spesces of /
Glotonye after seint Gregorie ¶ The firste is. for to ete bi-
forn tyme to ete ¶ The seconde is / whan a man get hym.
to delicaat mete / or drynke [829] ¶ The thridde is. whan
men taken to muche ouer mesure ¶ The fourthe is
curiositee with greet entente. to maken and apparailen
his mete ¶ The fifthe is. for to eten to gredily [830] These
been / the fyue fynynges of the deueles hand. by whiche.

¶ Of othere
manere spesces
of Glotonye.
whiche been
likned to the .v.
fynynges of the
deueles hand.
*secundum
sanctum
Gregorium*

he draweth folk to synne 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀

¶ *Remedium contra peccatum Gule* 𐄂

[831]

Agayns Glotonye is the remedie Abstinence. as seith Galien. but that holde I nat meritorie. if he do it oonly for the heele of his body ||. seint Augustyn wole / that Abstinence be doon for vertu and with pacience [832] ¶ Abstinence he seith is litel worth /. but if a man haue good wil ther-to. and but it be enforced by pacience and by charitee. and that men doon it for godes sake. and in hope to haue the blisse of heuene

¶ Augustinus

¶ Of the felawes
of Abstinence
¶ Attemperaunce¶ Shame
¶ Suffisaunce

¶ Measure

¶ Sobrenesse

¶ Sparynge

[833] ¶ The felawes of Abstinence / been. Attemperaunce that holdeth the meene in alle thynges ¶ Eek shame. that eschueth alle deshonestee ¶ Suffisaunce / that seketh no riche metes ne drynkes. ne dooth no fors of to outragous apparai'lynge of mete [834] ¶ Measure also. that restreyneth by resoñ / the deslauce appetit of etyngo ¶ Sobrenesse also. that restreyneth the outrage of drynke || [835] sparynge also. that restreyneth the delicaat ese to sitte longe at his mete and softly. wherfore / som folk stonden of hir owene wyl / to eten / at the lasse leyser

¶ *Sequitur de Luxuria* 𐄂

[836]

After Glotonye / thanne comth lecherie. for these two synnes / been so ny cosyns. that ofte tyme / they wol nat departe. [837] god woot this synne is ful displesañt thyng to god. ffor he seyde hym self / do no lecherie. and therefore / he putte grete peynes agayns this synne / in the olde lawe [838] ¶ If woman thral / were taken in this synne. she sholde be beten with staues to the deeth. And if she were a gentil womman / she sholde be slayn with stones. And if she were a bisshoppes doghter / she sholde been brent by goddes comandement [839] ¶ fforther ouer / by the synne of lecherie / god dreynte al the world / at the

¶ Of diuerse
Iuyces / to
diuerse women
of estaat / for the
synne of lecherye¶ How for the
synne of lecherie
al the world was

diluge. And after that he brente .v. Citees with thonder dreynt/ And .v. Citees brent & sonken
 leyt^t and sank hem in to helle

[840] Now lat vs speke thanne / of thilke stynkyng^e ¶ Of the synne of Auowtrie
 synne of lecherie that men clepe Auowtrie. of wedded folk /. that is to seyn. if that oon of hem be wedded.

or elles bothe [841] ¶ Seint Iohn seith that Auowtiers ¶ Nota secundum Iohannem
 shullen been in helle / in a stank brennyng of fyr and of Brymston [. no gap in the MS.] for the stynk of hire ordure /. [842] Certes / the brekyng of this sacrament^t is an horrible thyng/. it was makid of god hym self in paradys and confermed by Ihesu crist^t as witnesseth seint Mathew in the gospel. A man shal lete ¶ Mathei .19^o.

fader and mooder/ and taken hym to his wif/ And they shullen be two in o fless^h [843] ¶ This sacrament^t bitokeneth the knyttyng togidre / of Crist^t and of hooly chirche. [844] And nat oonly that god forbad Auowtrie in dede. but eek he comanded that thou sholdest nat coucite thy neighebores wyf [845] ¶ In this heeste seith seint Augustyn. is forboden alle manere couciteise to doon ¶ Sanctus Augustinus ¶ Mathei .v.10

lecherie ¶ Lo what seith seint Mathew in the gospel. that who so seeth a womman to couciteise of his lust /. he hath doon lecherie / with hire in his herte. [846] Heere may ye seen / that nat oonly. the dede of this synne is forboden. but eek the desir / to doon that synne / [847] This cursed synne anoyeth greuoussliche hem that it haunten ¶ And first to hire soule. for he obligeth it to synne and to peyne of death that is perdurable ||. [848] vn-to the body. anoyeth it greuoussly also for it dreyeth hym. and wasteth. and shent hym. and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the feen^t of helle. it wasteth his catel and his substañce. [849] And certes if it be a foul thyng / a man to waste ¶ Nota

his catel on wommen. yet is it a fouler thyng/. whan that for swich ordure. wommen dispenden vp-on men hir catel and substañce [850] ¶ This synne as seith the prophete ¶ propheta
 bireueth man and womman hir goode fame. and al hire honour. and it is ful plesant to the deuel. for ther-by

wynneth he. the mooste partie of this world ||.
[851] And right as a Marchant/ deliteth hym moost
in ¹chaffare / that he hath moost auantage of // right
so deliteth the fend in this ordure.

¶ Of .v. fyngres
of the deuceles
hande

¶ The firste
fyngre

¶ The .ij.^{de}
fynger
¶ Salomon

¶ The .liij.^{de}
fynger

¶ The .liij.^o
fynger

¶ How this olde
leechours / been
likned to
houndes

¶ Nota

¶ How a man
sholde louen his
wyf

[852] this is that oother hand of the deuel / with .v.
fyngres to cacche the peple to his vileynye [853] ¶ The
firste fynger / is the fool lookynge of the fool womman.
and of the fool man. that sleeth / right as the Basilicok^t
sleeth folk^t by the venym of his sighte. for the coueitise
of eyen / folweth the coueitise of the herte [854] ¶ The
seconde fynger / is the vileyns touchynge in wikkede
manere. And ther-fore seith Salomon. / That who so
toucheth and handleth a womman. he fareth lyk hym
that handleth the Scorpion þat styngeth and sodeynly
sleeth / thurgh his enuenymynge. as who so toucheth
warm pych. it shent^t hise fyngres [855] ¶ The thridde. is
foule wordes. that fareth lyk fyr. that right anon /
brenneth the herte [856] ¶ The fourthe fynger / is the
kissyngre. and trewely / he were a greet fool that wolde
kisse the mouth of a brennyngre Ouene / or of a fourneys.
[857] And moore foolcs been they that kissen in vileynye.
for that mouth / is the mouth of helle. and namely thise
olde dotardes holours. yet wol they kisse / though
they may nat do and smatre hem [858] Certes / they
been lyk to houndes. for an hound / whan he comth by
the Roser / or by othere beautees. though he may nat
pisse. yet wole he heue vp his leg / and make a con-
tenaunce to pisse [859] And for that many man weneth.
that he may nat synne. for no likerousnesse that he dooth
with his wyf./ Certes that opinion is fals. god woot. a
man may sleen hym self/ with his owene knyf / and make
hym seluen dronken of his owene tonne ||. [860] Certes
be it wyf be it child / or any worldly thyng/ that he
loueth biforn god. it is his mawmet^t and he is an ydolastre
[861] ¶ Man sholde louen his wyf/ by discrecion
paciently and atemprely. and thanne is she. as though it

were his suster [862] ¶ The fifthe fynger of the deueles ¶ The v^e fynger
hand^e is the stynkyng dede of lecherie [863] ¶ Certes the .v. of the deueles
fyngres of Glotonie the feend put in the wombe of a man. hands
and with hise .v. fyngres of lecherie. he gripeth hym by
the reynes / for to throwen hym in to the fourneys of
helle. [864] ther as they shul han the fyr and the wormes
that euere shul lasten. and wepyng and wailynge /
sharpe hunger and thurst. and grymnesse of deueles /
that shullen al to-trede hem with-outen respit^t and with-
outen ende [865] ¶ Of lecherie / as I seyde / sourden ¶ Of diuerse
diuerse speces ¶ As ffornicacion / that is bitwixe man spes of
and womman / that^t been nat maried. and this is deedly lecherie
synne and agayns nature. [866] Al that is enemy and
destruccioñ to nature. is agayns nature [867] Parfay / the
resoñ of a man / telleth eek hym wel / that it is deedly
synne. for as muche. as god forbad lecherie. And seint
Paul yeueþ hem the regne that nys dewe to no wight.
but to hem that doon deedly synne [868] ¶ Another synne
of lecherie. is to bireue a mayden of hir maydenhede. ¶ Of the synne.
for he that so dooth. / certes / he casteth a mayden / out to bireue. a
of the hyeste degree that is in this present lif. [869] and mayden / of hir
bireueþ hire thilke precious fruyt^t that the book clepeth maydenhede
the hundred fruyt^t I ne kan seye it noon oother weyes in
englissh. but in latyn / it highte Centesimus fructus
[870] ¶ Certes / he that so dooth. is cause of manye
damages and vileynyes / mo than any man kan rekene.
right as he som tyme is cause of alle damages that beestes
don in the feeld^t. that breketh the hegge or the closure.
thurgh which he ¹destroyeth. that may nat been restooed.
[871] ¶ ffor certes / namoore may maydenhede be re-
stooed. than an Arm that is smyten fro the body may
retourne agayn to wexe. / [872] She may haue mercy this
woot I wel. if she do penitence. but neuere shal it
be / that she nas corrupt^t [873] ¶ And al be it so that I
haue spoken somewhat of Auowtrie. it is good to shewen mo
perils that longen to Auowtrie. for to eschue that foule

¶ What Auowtrie is /. And of diuerse perils þat longen to Auowtrie synne [874] Auowtrie in latyn is for to seyn. Approchyng of oother mannes bed. thurgh which / tho that whilom weren o flessħ abawndone hir bodyes to othere persones [875] ¶ Of this synne / as seith the wise man folwen manye harmes ¶ first brekyng of feith. and certes. in feith is. the keye of Cristendom. [876] and whan that feith is broken and lorn. soothly Cristendom stant veyn and with-uten fruyt [877] ¶ This synne is eek a thefte. for thefte generally is for to reue a wight his thyng agayns his wille [878] ¶ Certes / this is the fouleste thefte that may be. whan a womman / steleth hir body from hir housbonde and yeueth it to hire holour to defoulen hire ./ and steleth hir soule fro Crist / and yeueth it to the deuel. [879] this is a fouler thefte. than for to breke a chirche and stele the chalice ||. for thise Auowtiers breken the temple of god spiritually and stelen the vessel of grace. that is the body and the soule. for which Crist shal destroyen hem. as seith Seint Paul [880] ¶ Soothly of this thefte douted gretly Ioseph. whan that his lordes wyf preyed hym of vileynye. whan he seyde. lo my lady. how my lord hath take to me vnder my warde al that he hath in this world. ne no thyng of hise thynges is out of my power/ but oonly / ye that been his wyf. [881] And how sholde I thanne do this wikkednesse and synne so horrible agayns god / and agayns my lord^s god it forbeede. Allas al to litel. is swich trouthe now y-founde [882] ¶ The thridde harm. is the filthe / thurgh which they breken the comandement of god. and defoulen the Actour of matrimoyne þat is Crist/. [883] ffor certes / in so muche as the sacrement of mariage is so noble and so digne. so muche is it gretter synne for to breken it. for god made mariage in Paradys in the estaat of Innocence to multiplie man kynde to the seruice of god. [884] and therefore. is the brekyng moore greuous. of which brekyng comen false heires ofte tyme that wrongfully ocupien folkes heritages. And therefore / wol Crist putte

hem out of the regne of heuene that is heritage to goode folk [885] ¶ Of this brekyng comth eek ofte tyme. that folk vnwar / wedden or synnen with hire owene kynrede. and namely / thilke harlottes that haunten bordels of this fool wommen. that mowe be likned to a commune gonge where as men purgen hire ordure [886] ¶ What seye we eek of Putours þat lyuen by the horrible synne of putrie. and constreyne wommen to yelden to hem a certeyn rente of hire bodily puterie. ye somtyme of his owene wyf / or his child. as doon this bawdes / certes / thise been cursede synnes [887] ¶ Vnderstood eek / that Auowtrie is set gladly in the ten comandementz bitwixe thefte and manslaughter. for it is / the gretteste thefte that may be. for it is thefte of body and of soule. [888] and it is lyk to homycide. for it kerueth atwo and breketh atwo / hem / that first were makid o flessĥ. and therefore / by the olde lawe of god they sholde be slayn. [889] but natheles by the lawe of Ihesu crist that is lawe of pitee. whan he seyde to the ¹womman that was founden in Auowtrie. and sholde han been slayn with stones. after the wyl of the Iewes as was hir lawe. Go quod Ihesu crist and haue namoore wyl to synne. or wille namoore to do synne || [890] Soothly / the vengeance of Auowtrie is awarded to the peynes of helle but if so be / that it be destourbed by penitence [891] Yet been ther mo spesces of this cursed synne. as whan that oon of hem is religious. or elles bothe. or of folk / that been entred in-to ordre. as subdekne or preest^r or hospitaliers. and euere the hyer that he is in ordre. the gretter is the synne [892] ¶ The thynges that gretly agreggen hire synne. is the brekyng of hire Auow of chastitee. whan they receyued the ordre ||. [893] And forther ouer sooth is that hooly ordre. is chief of al the tresorie of god. and his especial signe and mark of chastitee. to shewe that they been ioyned to chastitee which that is moost precious lyf that is /. [894] And thise ordred folk^r been specially titled to god / and of the

¶ Of putours that lyuen / by the puterye of wommen

¶ Of Religious and ordred folk / that vsen leecherye

special meignee of god. for which / when they doon deedly synne. they been / the special traytours of god and of his peple. for they lyuen of the peple ||. [.

. :
 . no gap in the MS.] [895] Preestes been Aungeles. as by

¶ *Sanctus Paulus* the dignitee of hir mysterye / but for sothe / seint Paul seith / that Sathanas transformeth hym in an Aungel of light. / [896] Soothly / the preest' that' haunteth deedly synne. he may be likned to the Aungel of derknesse transformed in the Aungel of light / he semeth Aungel of light'. but for sothe / he is Aungel of derknesse

[¹ *first Belie*] [897] ¶ swiche preestes been the sones of ¹Helie. as

¶ *In libro Regum* sheweth in the book of Kynges. that they weren the sones of Belial. that is the deuel ||. [898] Belial is to seyn / with-uten Iuge. and so faren they / hem thynketh they been free and han no Iuge. namoore than hath a free bole that taketh / which Cow that hym liketh in the town. [899] so faren they by wommen. / ffor right as a free bole. is ynough for al a toun. right so is a wikked preest' corrupcion ynough for al a parisshe. or for al a contree ||. [900] Thise preestes as seith the book / ne konne nat the mysterie of preesthode to the peple. ne god ne knowe they nat. they ne holde hem nat apayd as seith the book' of soden flesshe that was to hem offred / but they tooke by force / the flesshe that is rawe [901] ¶ Certes / so thise shrewes / ne holden hem nat apayed of roosted flesshe and sode flesshe. with which the peple / fedden hem in greet reuerence. but they wole haue raw flesshe of folkes wyues and hir doghtres. / [902] And certes / thise wommen that consenten to hire harlotrie / doon greet wrong' to Crist' and to hooly chirche / and alle halwes. and to alle soules. for they bireuen alle thise. hym that sholde worshipe Crist' and hooly chirche And preye for cristeno soules ||. [903] And therefore han swiche preestes and hire lemmanes eek' that consenten to hir lecherie the malisoñ of al the court cristiene. til they come to amendement

¶ *Notate & caute*

[904] The thridde spece of Auowtrie / is som tyme bitwixe ¶ Of Auowtrie /
 a man and his wyf and that is whan they take no reward bitwixe a man
 and his wyf
 in hire assemblynge. but oonly to hire flessħly delit /. as
 seith seint Ierome. [905] And ne rekken of no thyng^r but ¶ Ieronimus
 that they been assembled. by cause that they been maried
 al is good ynough as thynketh to hem. [906] but in swich
 folk^r hath the deuel power / as seyde the Aungel Raphael ¶ Angelus
 to Thobie. for in hire assemblynge / they putten Ihesu Raphael ad
 Thobiam
 crist^r out of hire herte. and yeuen hem self^r to alle ordure
 [907] The fourthe spece is. the assemblee of hem that been ¶ Of the assem-
 blee of hem/
 of hire kynrede. or of hem / that been of oon affynytee. or that/ been of o
 kynrede
 elles with hem with whiche hir fadres / or hir kynrede /
 han deled in the synne of lecherie / this synne / maketh
 hem lyk to houndes that taken no kepe to kynrede ¶ Of kynrede in
 two maneres /
 [908] ¶ And certes parentele is in two maneres / outhur outhur goostly /
 goostly or flessħly /. goostly / as for to deelen with hise or flessħly
 godsibbes. [909] for right so as he that engendreth a child /
 is his flessħly fader / right so is his godfader / his fader
 espirituel. for which / a womman may in no lasse synne
 assemblen with hire godsib / than with hire owene flessħly
 brother [910] The fifthe spece. is thilke abhomynable ¶ The .v^o. speche
 of lecherie
 synne. of which / that no man vnnethe oghte speke ne
 write. natheles / it is openly reherced in holy writ ||
 [911] This cursednesse doon men and wommen in diuerse
 entente and in diuerse manere. but though that hooly writ^r
 speke of horrible synne. certes / hooly writ^r may nat been
 defouled. namoore / than the sonne that shyneth on the
 Mixne [912] Another synne aperteneth to leccherie that ¶ Of the synne of
 Polucioñ
 comp in slepynge. and this synne cometh ofte / to hem
 that been maydenes / and eek/ to hem that been corrupt.
 and this synne men clepen Polucioñ that comth in .iij.
 maneres ||. [913] Somtyme / of langwissyng of body / for
 the humours been to ranke / and habundaunt^r in the body
 of man ¶ Somtyme of infermetee. for the fieblesse of the
 vertu retentif. as phisik maketh mencioñ ¶ som tyme for
 surfeet^r of mete and drynke [914] ¶ And somtyme / of

vileyns thoghtes. that been enclosed in mannes mynde /
whan he gooth to slepe. which may nat been with-oute
synne. for which men moste kepen hem wisely. or elles /
may men synnen ful greously

¶ Remedium contra peccatum luxurie ☉

N^[915]ow comth the remedie agayns lecherie. and that
is generally Chastitee and Continance. that re-
streyneth alle / the desordeynee moeuynge / that comen
of fleshly talentes. [916] And euere / the gretter merite
shal he han. that moost restreyneth the wikkede eschaw-
fynges of the ordure of this synne. and this is in two
maneres. that is to seyn / chastitee in mariage and chastitee
of widwehode [917] **N**ow shaltow vnderstonde that
matrimoyne / is leefful assemblynge of man And of
womman / that receyuen by vertu of the sacrement the
boond. thurgh which they may nat be departed in al hir
lyf that is to seyn. whil that they lyuen bothe
[918] This as seith the book / is a ful greet sacrement.
god maketh it. as I haue seyde in Paradys. and wolde hym
self. be born in mariage. [919] and for to halwen mariage.
he was at a weddyng. where as he turned water in to
wyn. which was / the firste miracle that he wroghte in
erthe bifore hise disciples [920] ¶ Trewe effect of
mariage / clenseth fornicacioñ and replenyseth hooly
chirche of good lynage. for that is the ende of mariage.
and it chaungeth deedly synne in to venial synne / bitwixe
hem that been ywedded. and maketh the hertes al oon /
of hem that been ywedded. as wel as the bodies.
[921] verray mariage. that was establised by
god. er that synne bigan. whan natureel lawe / was in his
right poynt in Paradys and it was ordeyned. that o man /
sholde haue but o womman. and o womman but o man.
as seith Seint Augustyn by manye resoñs

[922] ¶ first for mariage is figured / bitwixe Crist and

¶ Of chastitee in
two maneres

¶ What matri-
moyne is

¶ Of trewe effect/
of mariage

¶ How o man
sholde haue but
o womman.
And o womman
but o man in
mariage *secun-
dum* Augusti-
num

holy chirche. And that oother is ¹for a man / is heued of
 a womman. algate / by ordinaunce it sholde be so.
 [923] ffor if a womman / hadde no men than oon. thanne
 sholde she haue / moo heuedes than oon. and that were an
 horrible thyng^r biforn god. and eek / a womman / ne
 myghte nat plesse to many folk / at oones. / And also /
 ther ne sholde neuere be pees ne reste amonges hem. for
 euerich / wolde / axen his owene thyng [924] ¶ And
 forther ouer / no man ne sholde knowe / his owene en-
 gendrure. ne who sholde haue his heritage. and the
 womman sholde been the lasse biloued / fro the tyme that
 she were / conioynt to many men

[925] NOW comth / how that a man sholde bere hym ¶ How a man
 with his wif / and namely in two thynges. that is to sholde bere him
 seyn / in suffraunce and reuerence as shewed Crist. with his wyf^r
 whan he made first womman. [926] ffor he ne made hire
 nat of the heued of Adam. for she sholde nat clayme to
 greet lordshipe [927] for ther as the womman hath the
 maistrie / she maketh to mucche desray / ther neden none
 ensamples of this. the experience of day by day
 oghte suffise [928] ¶ Also certes / god ne made nat
 womman of the foot of Adam / for she ne sholde nat been
 holden to lowe. for she kan nat paciently suffre. but god
 made womman of the ryb of Adam. for womman sholde
 be felawe vn-to man [929] Man sholde bere hym to his
 wyf^r In feith / in trouthe / and in loue / as seith seint ¶ Sanctus
 Paul. that a man sholde louen his wyf / as Crist loued Paulus
 hooly chirche /. that loued it so wel / that he deyde for it.
 so sholde a man for his wyf^r if it were nede

[930] ¶ Now / how that a womman / sholde be subget^r ¶ How a
 to hire housbonde that telleth seint Peter. ffir^rt in Obedi- womman / sholde
 ence [931] ¶ And eek / as seith the decree. A womman that be subget to hir
 is wyf / as longe as she is a wyf / she hath noon housbonde /
 Auctoritee to swere ne bere witnesse / with-oute leue of secundum Petrum
 hir housbonde. that is hire lord / algate / he sholde be so & decretum
 by resoñ [932] ¶ She sholde eek / seruen hym in alle

honestee. and been attemptree of hire array /. I woot^t wel/
 that they sholde setten hire entente to plesen hir hous-
 bondes but nat^t by hire queyntise of array [933] ¶ Seint
 Ierome seith / that wyues / that been apparailled in silk/ and
 in precious purple. ne mowe nat clothen hem in Ihesu
 Crist. / What seith seint Iohn eek / in thys matere §||
 [934] Seint Gregorie eek seith. that no wight^t seketh
 precious array. but oonly for veyne glorie / to been
 honoured the moore / biforn the peple ||. [935] It is a greet
 folye /. a womman to haue a fair array outward^t / and in
 hir self / foul inward^t [936] ¶ A wyf / sholde eek be
 mesurable in lookyng and in beryng and in lawghyng /
 and discreet^t in alle hire wordes / and hire dedes. [937] and
 abouen alle worldly thyng^t she sholde louen hire housbonde
 with al hire herte. and to hym / be trewe of hir body
 [938] ¶ so sholde an housbonde eek^t be to his wyf /.
 ffor sith that/ al the body / is the housbondes. so sholde
 hire herte been. or elles / ther is bitwixe hem two. as in
 that^t no parfit mariage [939] Thanne shal men vnder-
 stonde. that for thre thynges / a man and his wyf^t flesshly
 mowen assemble || ¶ The firste. is in entente of engen-
 drure of children. to the seruice of god. ffor *certes* / that is
 the cause final of matrimoyne [940] ¶ Another cause is. to
 yelden euerich of hem to oother / the dette of hire bodies.
 ffor neither of hem / hath power ouer his owene body /
 ¶ The thridde is. for to eschewe lecherye and vileynye
 ¶ The ferthe / is for sothe deedly synne [941] As to the
 1st firste / it is *meritorie* /. the seconde also / for as seith the
 decree. that she hath [merite of chastitee] þat yeldeth to
 hire housbonde the dette of hir body. ye though^t it be
 agayn hir likyng and the lust of hire herte [942] ¶ The
 thridde manere is venyal synne. and trewely scarsly may
 ther any [of] thise be *with-oute* venial synne / for the
 corrupcion and for the delit / [943] ¶ The fourthe
 manere is for to vnderstonde. if they assemble oonly for
 amorous loue / and for noon of the foreseyde causes. but

¶ *Nota secundum sanctum Ieronimum*

¶ *Sanctus Gregorius*

¶ How a wyf sholde be mesurable in lookyng & in beryng & cetera

¶ How a man & his wyf mowen assemble flesshly for .iij. thynges

¶ *In decreto*

for to accomplice thilke brennyng delit / they rekke
neuere how ofte. soothly it is deedly synne. and yet *with*
sorwe somme folk wol peynen hem moore to doon / than
to hire appetit suffiseth

[944] The seconde manere of chastitee / is for to been ¶ Of chastitee in
a clene wydewe *and* eschue the embracynges of man ^{wydwehede}
and desiren the embracynge of Ihesu crist. [945] these
been tho þat han been wyues *and* han forgoon hire hous-
bondes. and eek wommen þat han doon leccherie *and* been
releued by Penitence [946] ¶ And *certes*. if þat a wyf
koude kepen hire al chaast by licence of hir housbonde so
þat she yeue neuere noon occasion þat he agilte. it
were to hire a greet merite [947] ¶ These manere
wommen þat obseruen chastitee [.
. no gap in the MS.] in clothyng
and in contenañce / & been abstinent in etyng. *and*
drynkynge. in spekyng / *and* in dede. they been the
vessel / or the boyste of the blissed Magdelene / þat
fulfilleth hooly chirche of good odour [948] The thridde ¶ Of chastitee in
manere of chastitee is virginitee. *and* it bihoueth þat she ^{virginitee}
be hooly in herte *and* clene of body / thanne is she
spouse to Ihesu crist *and* she is the lyf of Angeles.
[949] she is the preisynge of this world. *and* she is as
thise martirs in egalitee. she hath in hire. that tonge may
nat telle ne herte thynke ¶. [950] Virginitee baar oure lord
Ihesu crist *and* virgine was hym selue

[951] Another remedie agayns leccherie. is specially / ¶ Of another
to withdrawen swiche thynges / as yeue occasion to thilke ^{remedie agayns}
vileynye. as ese. etyng *and* drynkynge / for *certes* / whan ^{leccherie}
the pot boyleth strongly /. the beste remedie is to with-
drawe the fyr [952] ¶ Slepyng. longe in greet quiete.
is eek a greet norice to leccherie

[953] ¶ Another remedie agayns leccherie. is / þat a ¶ Another
man or a woman eschue the compaignye of hem by ^{remedie agayns}
whiche he douteth to be tempted. for al be it so þat the ^{leccherie}
dede is withstonden. yet is ther greet temptacioñ ¶.

¶ Nota

[954] Soothly. a whit wal. al-though it ne brenne nocht fully by stikynge of a candele. yet is the wal blak of the leyt. [955] ¶ fful ofte tyme I rede. þat no man truste in his owene perfeccioñ but he be stronger than Sampson. & hoolier than Danyel. & wiser than Salomon

[956] ¶ Now after þat I haue declared yow as I kan the seuene deedly synnes *and* somme of hire braunches *and* hire remedies: soothly if .I. koude .I. wolde telle yow the ten comandementz. [957] but so heigh a doctrine I lete to diuines. natheles I hope to god. they been touched in this tretice euerich of hem alle

¶ Sequitur secunda pars Penitencie ☩

[958] **N**ow for as muche. as the second partie of Penitence. stant in Confessioñ of mouth / as I bigan in the firste Chapitre / I seye. seint Augustyn seith

What synne is.
secundum
Augustinum

[959] ¶ Synne is every word and every dede. *and* al þat men coueiten agayn the lawe of Ihesu crist. *and* this is for to synne. in herte. in mouth. and in dede by thy five wittes. that been. sighte. herynge. smellynge. tasyng / or sauourynge. *and* feelynge: [960] Now is it good to vnderstonde that. þat agreggeth muchel leuery synne [961] ¶ Thow shalt considere / what thow art þat doost the synne / wheither thou be male or femele. yong / or oold. gentil or thral. free / or seruant. hool / or sykt. wedded or sengle. ordred / or vnordred. wys or / fool. clerk / or seculer. [962] if she be of thy kynrede / bodily or goostly or noon / if any of thy kynrede haue synned with hire or noon /. and manye mo thinges

¶ Memorandum
 mors intrauit/
 per fenestras

¶ Of thynges þat
 agreggeth synne.
 and the firste is
 this

[963] ¶ Another circumstance is this. wheither it be doon in fornicacioñ or in Auowtrie or noon / Incest or noon /. mayden or noon. in manere of homicide / or noon. horrible grete synnes / or smale. and how longe thou hast continued in synne [964] ¶ The thridde circumstance / is the place / ther thou hast do synne. wheither in oother

¶ The .ij. de
 circumst. . . .

¶ The .liij. de
 circumstance

meznes hous / or in thyn owene. in feeld or in chirche /
 or in chirchewawe. in chirche dedicaat / or noon.
 [965] for if the chirche be halwed. *and* man or womman
 spille his kynde in with that place by wey of synne or by
 wikked temptacioñ / the chirche is entredited [. . . .
 *no gap in the MS.*] [966] *and* the
 preest þat dide swich a vileynye. to terme of al his lif/ he
 sholde namoore synge masse. *and* if he dide. he sholde
 doon deedly synne / at euery time þat he so songe masse /
 [967] ¶ The fourthe circumstañce is. by whiche mediators /
 or by whiche messagers / as for enticement^r or for
 consentement^r to bere compaignye *with* felawshipe. for
 many a wrecche for to bere compaignye shal go to the
 deuel of helle. [968] wherfore / they þat eggen or con-
 senten to the synne / been parteners of the synne / *and*
 of the temptacioñ of the synnere.

¶ The .iiij.^o
circumstañce

[969] ¶ The fifthe circumstañce. is / how manye tymes
 þat he hath synned / if it be in his mynde / *and* how ofte
 þat he hath falle. [970] for he þat ofte falleth in synne.
 he despiseth the mercy of god *and* encreesseth hys synne
and is vnkynde to *crisť*. *and* he wexeth the moore fieble
 to withstonde synne *and* synneth the moore lightly /
 [971] *and* the latter ariseth / *and* is the moore eschew for
 to shryuen hym / namely / to hym þat is his Confessour /
 [972] ffor which that folk / whan they falle agayn
 in hir olde folies. outhere they forleten hir olde confessours
 al outrely. or elles they departen hir shrift^r in diuerse
 places. but soothly / swich departed shrift^r deserueth no
 mercy of god of hise synnes [973] ¶ The sixte circum-
 stañce / is why þat a man synneth as by temptacioñ
and if hym self procure thilke temptacioñ / or by the ex-
 citynge of oother folk^r. or if he synne *with* a womman by
 force / or by hire owene assent. [974] or if the womman
 maugree hir hed hath been afforced or noon / this
 shal she telle. ffor coueitise / or for pouerte. *and*
 if it was hire procurynge or noon / *and* swiche manere

¶ The .v.^o
circumstañce

¶ The .vi.^o
circumstañce

The .vij.^o
circumstaunce

harneys [975] ¶ The seuenthe circumstañce / is / in what manere he hath doon his synne / or how þat she hath suffred þat folk han doon to hire. [976] And the same shal the man telle pleyntyly *with* alle circumstañces. and wheither he hath synned *with comune* bordel wommen or noon. [977] or doon his synne in hooly tymes or noon. in fastyng tymes or noon. or biforn his shrifte. or after his latter shrifte. [978] and hath *per auenture* / broken therfore his penance enioyned. by whos helpe *and* whos conseil. by sorcerie or craft. al moste be toold [979] ¶ Alle thise thynges. after þat they been grete or smale engreggen the conscience of man. And eek the preest þat is thy Iuge may the bettre been auysed of his Iuggement in yeuyng of thy penañce and that is after thy contricioñ || [980] ffor vnderstond wel þat after tyme þat a man hath defouled his baptesme by synne. if he wole come to ¹saluacioun. ther is noon other wey / but by penitence / *and* shrifte *and* satisfaccioun [981] *and* namely by the two if ther be a confessour / to which he may shriuen hym / *and* the thridde if he haue lyf to parfournen it

[982] Thanne shal man looke *and* considere / þat if he wole maken a trewe *and* a profitable confessioun ther moste be .iiij. condicioñs [983] ¶ ffirst it moot been in sorweful bitternesse of herte. as seyde the kyng Ezechiel to god /. I wol remembre me alle the yeres of my lif in bitternesse of myn herte /. [984] this condicioñ of bitternesse hath fyue signes ¶ The firste is / þat confessioñ moste be shamefast. nat for to couere ne hyden his synne / for he hath agilt his god *and* defouled his soule /. [985] And ther-of seith seint Augustyn ¶ the herte *trauailleth* for shame of his synne / and for he hath greet shamefastnesse / he is digne to haue greet mercy of god [986] ¶ Swich was the confessioñ of the Puplican þat wolde nat heuen vp hise eyen to heuene / for he hadde offended god of heuene / for which shamefastnesse / he hadde anon the mercy of god [987] ¶ And ther-of seith

¶ How shrift moot been sorweful

¶ Nota de confessiōne Regis Ezechiele

¶ How confessioun moste be shamefast

¶ Sanctus Augustinus.

Nota de confessiōne Publicani

seint Augustyn / that swich shamefast folk / been next
 foryeuenesse and remissioñ [988] Another signe / is ¶ Of humylitee
 humylitee in confessioun. of which seith seint Peter / in confessioun
 Humbleth yow vnder the myght of god. the hond of god Vide sanctus
 is myghty in confessiõ. for ther-by / god foryeueth thee Petrus.
 thy synnes. for he allone hath the power / [989] & this
 humylitee shal been in herte *and* in signe outward. for
 right as he hath humylitee to god in his herte § right so
 sholde he humble his body outward to the preest/ þat sit
 in goddes place. [990] ffor which in no manere sith þat
 crist is souereyn *and* the preest meene *and* mediatour bi-
 twixe crist *and* the synnere. *and* the synnere is the laste.
 by wey of resoñ [991] thanne sholde nat the synnere sitte
 as heighe as his confessour/ but knele biforn hym / or at
 his feet but if maladie destourbe it /. ffor he shal nat taken
 kepe. who sit there / but in whos place þat he sitteth ||.
 [992] A man þat hath trespassed to a lord *and* comth for to
 axe mercy *and* maken his accord. *and* set him down anon
 by the lord / men wolde holden hym outrageous *and* nat
 worthy so soone for to haue remissioñ ne mercy [993] ¶ The
 thridde signe is. how þat thy shrift sholde be ful of teeris if ¶ How a mannes
 man may / and if man may nat wepe with hise bodily eyen / shrift/ sholde be
 lat hym wepe in herte /. [994] Swich was the confession ful of teeris
 of seint Peter/ for after þat he hadde forsake Ihesu crist/ ¶ Nota de con-
 he wente out *and* weepe ful bitterly [995] ¶ The fourthe fessione sancti
 signe is / þat he ne lette nat for shame to shewen Petri /
 his confessiõ [996] ¶ swich was the confessiõ of the ¶ How a man
 Magdalene / þat ne spared for no shame of hem þat weren sholde nat lette
 atte feeste for to go to oure lord Ihesu crist/ *and* biknowe shewen his con-
 to hym hire synnes [997] ¶ The fifthe signe is / that a man fessione
 or a womman be obeisant to receyuen. the penaunce þat ¶ Nota de con-
 hym is enioyned for hise synnes. for certes Ihesu crist for fessione Marie
 the giltes of a man / was obedient to the deeth Magdalene
 [998] ¶ The seconde con[dicion] of verray confession / ¶ How a man
 is / þat it be hastily doon. for certes / if a man hadde a sholde been
 deedly wounde euere the lenger þat he taried to warisshe hastily sholde been
 diuerse causes.

hym self / the moore wolde it corrupte and haste hym to
 his deeth and eek the wounde / wolde be the wors for to
 heele. [999] ¶ And right / so fareth synne / þat longe
 tyme is in a man vnshewed [1000] ¶ Certes a man oghite
 hastily shewen hise synnes for manye causes. as for drede
 of deeth þat cometh ofte sodenly. *and* no certeyn what
 tyme it shal be / ne in what place. *and* eek^t the drecchyng
 of o synne draweþ In another / [1001] *and* eek^t the lenger
 þat he tarieth / the ferther he is fro crist^t ¹And if he abide
 to his laste day / scarsly may he shryuen hym / or re-
 membre hym of hise synnes / or repenten hym / for the
 greuous maladie of his deeth [1002] and for as muche as
 he ne hath nat in his lyf^t herkned Ihesu crist^t whanne he
 hath spoken. he shal crie to Ihesu crist^t at his laste
 day / *and* scarsly wol he herkne hym [1003] ¶ And
 vnderstonð / that this condicioñ moste han foure thynges
 ¶ Thi shrift/ moste be purueyed bifore *and* auysed.
 for wikked haste dooth no profit/ and þat a man konne
 shryue hym of hise synnes / be it of pride or of Enuye and
 so forth of the speses *and* circumstances. [1004] *and* þat
 he haue comprehended in hys mynde the nombre *and* the
 greetnesse of hise synnes. *and* how longe þat he hath leyn
 in synne. [1005] *and* eek/ þat he be contrit of hise synnes.
 and in stidefast purpos by the grace of god neuere eft^t to
 falle in synne. and eek/ þat he drede *and* countrewaite
 hym self / þat he fle the occasioñs of synne to whiche he
 is enclyned [1006] ¶ Also / thou shalt shryue thee of alle
 thy synnes to o man / and nat a parcel to o man *and*
 a parcel to another /. that is to vnderstonde in entente /
 to departe thy confessioñ / as for shame or drede. for it
 nys but stranglyng of thy soule /. [1007] ffor certes Ihesu
 crist is entierly al good in hym nys noon imperfecioñ. and
 therefore / outhere he foryeueth al parfitly / or neuer a
 deel [1008] ¶ I seye nat^t þat if thow be assigned to the
 Penitañcer for certein synne. þat thow art bounde to
 shewen hym al the remenañt^t of thy synnes. of whiche

¶ How a mannes
 shrift moste be
 purueyed &
 auysed biforn.

¶ How a man
 shal shryue him
 of alle hise synnes
 to o man

thow hast be shryuen to thy curaat. but if it like to thee of thyn humylitee /. this is no departynge of shrifte. [1009] ne I seye nat ther as I speke of diuision of confessiō / þat if thou haue licence for to shryue thee to a discret and an honeste preest / where thee liketh and by licence of thy curaat. that thow ne mayst wel shryue thee to him of alle thy synnes. [1010] but lat no blotte be bihynde / lat no synne been vntoold / as fer as thow hast remembrance. [1011] and whan thou shalt be shryuen to thy curaat. telle hym eek alle the synnes þat thow hast doon / syn thou were last yshryuen / this is no wikked entente of diuision of shrifte

[1012] ¶ Also the verray shrifte axeth certeine condicioñs / ¶ first/ þat thow shryue thee by thy free wil noght constreyned. ne for shame of folk/. ne for maladie. ne swiche thynges. for it is resoñ þat he þat trespasseth by his free wyl. that by his free wyl / he confesse his trespas. [1013] and þat noon oother man telle his synne but he hym self. ne he shal nat nayte ne denye his synne. ne wratthe hym agayn the preest for his amonestynge to leue synne [1014] ¶ The seconde condicioñ. is þat thy shrift be laweful. that is to seyn / that thow þat shryuest thee / and eek the preest þat hereth thy confessiō been verrailly in the feith of hooly chirche. [1015] and þat a man / ne be nat despeired of the mercy of Ihesu crist as Caym or Iudas [1016] ¶ And eek a man moot accusen hym self / of his owene trespas and nat another / but he shal blame and wyten hym self/ & his owene malice of his synne / and noon oother. [1017] but nathelees / if that another man be occasiō or enticere of his synne. or the estaat of a persone be swich / thurgh which his synne is aggregated. or elles þat he may nat pleynty shryuen hym / but he telle the persone / with which he hath synned. thanne may he telle. [1018] so þat his entente / ne be nat/ to bakbite the persone / but oonly to declaren his confessiō

¶ How a man sholde shryue him by his free wyl vnconstreyned

¶ How a mannes shrift/ shal be laweful

¶ How a man moot accusen him self / & noon oother/ of his owene trespas

¶ How a man
shal make no
lesynges in his
confessioun

¶ *Nota secundum*
Augustinum

¶ How a man
moot shewe his
synne / by his
owene *propre*
mouthe

¶ How a man /
shal nat peynten
his confessioun

¶ How a man
shal shryuen hym
to a discret
preest/

¶ How a man
shal nat renne
sodeynly to
shrifte.

¶ *Nota /*

¶ *Sanctus*
Augustinus.

[1019] ¶ Thou ne shalt nat eek/ make no lesynges in thy confessiō / for humylitee *per* auenture / to seyn þat thou hast doon synnes of whiche that thou were neuere gilty [1020] ¶ ffor Seint Augustyn seith ¶ If thou ¹by cause of thyn humylitee / makest lesynges on thy self /. though̄ thou ne were nat in synne biforn / yet artow thanne in synne thurgh̄ thy lesynges / [1021] ¶ Thou most eek shewe thy synne / by thyn owene *propre* mouth̄ / but thou be woxe dowmb / and nat by no lettre. for thou that hast doon the synne thou shalt haue the shame therefore [1022] ¶ Thou shalt nat eek peynte thy confessiō by faire subtile wordes to couere the moore thy synne. for thanne bigilestow thy self/ and nat the preest/. thou most tellen it pleynly / be it neuere so foul ne so horrible [1023] ¶ Thou shalt eek shryue thee to a preest þat is discret to conseille. and eek thou shalt nat shryue thee for veyne glorie / ne for ypocrisye / ne for no cause / but oonly for the doute of Ihesu crist and the heele of thy soule. [1024] ¶ Thou shalt nat eek renne to the preest sodeynly to tellen hym lightly thy synne / as who so telleth a Iape or a tale / but aysely and with greet deuociō̄ ||. [1025] And generally shryue thee ofte ||. If thou ofte falle / ofte thou arise by confessiō̄. [1026] and though̄ thou shryue thee ofter than ones of synne / of which thou hast be shryuen. it is the moore merite^s And as seith seint Augustyn / thou shalt haue the moore lightly relesyng/ and *grace* of god / bothe of synne and of payne /. [1027] And certes oones a yeere atte leeste wey / it is lawful for to been housled. for certes oones a yeere / alle thynges renouellen

[1028] ¶ Now haue I toolde you of verray confessiō̄. that is the seconde *partie* of Penitence ॐ

¶ Explicit/ *secunda pars* Penitencie ⁊

et sequitur tertia pars eiusdem 𐄂

T^[1029]he thridde partie of Penitence. is Satisfaccioñ. and ¶ Of .iij. manere of Almeses. that stant moost generally in Almesse. and in bodily peyne [1030] ¶ Now been ther thre manere of Almeses ¶ Contricion of Herte: where a man offreth hymself to god ¶ Another is / to han pitee of defaute of hise neighebores ¶ And the thridde is / in yeuyng of good conseil goostly and bodily / where men han nede. and namely in sustenañce of mannes foode [1031] ¶ And tak [kepe] / þat a man hath nede of these ¶ Of the werkes of charitee thinges generally / he hath nede of foode. he hath nede / of clothyng / and herberwe. he hath nede of charitable conseil and visityng in prisone and in maladie / and sepulture of his dede body. [1032] And if thow mayst nat visite the nedeful with thy persone / visite hym by thy message and¹ by thy yiftes. / [1033] These been generally ¶ MS. repeats thy message and] almesses or werkes of charitee of hem that han temporel riches / or discrecion in conseilyng ¶ Of these werkes / shaltow heren at the day of doome^s

[1034] These Almeses shaltow doon of thyne owene propre thynges and hastily and priuely if thow mayst. [1035] but natheles / if thow mayst nat doon it priuely. thow shalt nat forbere to doon Almesse though men seen it / so that it be nat doon for thank of the world. but only for thank of Ihesu crist [1036] ¶ ffor as witnesseth Seint Mathew *capitulo .v.* A Citee may nat been hyd / ¶ *Mathei .5o.* that is set on a montayne. ne men lighte nat a lanterne and put it vnder a bussnel /. but men sette it on a candlestikke to yeue light to the men in the hous. / [1037] right so shal youre light lighten bfore men. that they may seen youre goode werkes and glorifie youre fader that is in heuene^s

[1038] ¶ Now as to speken of bodily peyne. it stant in ¶ Of bodily penaunce preyeres / in ²wakynges / in fastynges / in vertuouse

techinges of orisoñs / [1039] ¶ And ye shul vnderstonde /
 that orisoñs or preyeres / is for to seyn a pitous wyl of
 herte that redresseth it in god and expresseth it by word
 outward to remoeuen harmes and to han thynges
 espirituel and durable / and somtyme temporele thynges. /
 ¶ Of the orison
 of the pater
 noster /
 of whiche orisoñs certes / in the orison of the Pater noster /
 hath Ihesu crist enclosed moost thynges [1040] ¶ Certes
 it is priuyleged of thre thynges in his dignytee. for which
 it is moore digne than any oother preyere. for that Ihesu
 crist hym self maketh it / [1041] and it is short / for it sholde
 be koud the moore lightly. and for to withholden it the
 moore esily in herte. and helpen hym self / the offer with
 the orisoñ. [1042] and for a man sholde be the lasse wery
 to seyn it. and for a man may nat excusen hym to lerne
 it. it is so short and so esy. and for it comprehendeth in it
 self alle goode preyeres. / [1043] the exposicioñ of this
 hooly preyere / that is so excellent and digne I bitake to
 thise maistres of Theologie. saue thus muchel wol I seyn.
 that whan thou prayest / that god sholde foryeue thee thy
 giltes / as thou foryeuest hem that agilten to thee. be ful
 wel war / that thou be nat out of charitee ? [1044] ¶ This
 hooly crisoun amenuseth eek venyal synne / and therefore
 it aperteneth specially to penitence

[1045] This preyere / moste be trewely seyde and in
 verray feith. and that men preye to god ordinatly & dis-
 creetly & deuoutly. and alwey a man shal putten his wyl /
 to be subget to the wille of god [1046] ¶ This orisoñ
 moste eek been seyde with greet humbleesse and ful pure
 honestly. and nat to the anoyance of any man or womman /.
 It moste eek been continued with the werkes of charitee.
 [1047] It auayleth eek agayn the vices of the soule. for as
 ¶ Nota secundum
 Ieronimum.
 seith seint Ierome. By fastynge / been saued the vices of the
 flessch / and by preyer the vertues of the soule

[1048] ¶ After this. thou shalt vnderstonde / that
 bodily payne stant in wakyng. for Ihesu crist seith.
 waketh and preyeth that ye ne entre in wikked

temptacioñ [1049] ¶ Ye shul vnderstanden also. that fastyng stant in thre thynges. In forberyng of bodily mete and drynke. and in forberyng of worldly Iolitee. and in forberyng of deedly synne. this is to seyn / that a man shal kepen hym fro deedly synne with al his myght/

[1050] And thou shalt vnderstanden eek' that god ordeyned fastyng. and to fastyng appertenen .iiij. thynges. [1051] Largenesse to poure folk./ gladnesse of herte espirituel. nat to been angry / ne anoyed / ne grucche for he fasteth. / and also / resonable houre for to ete by mesure. that is for to seyn. a man shal nat ete in vntyme / ne sitte the lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth

[1052] ¶ Thanne shaltow vnderstonde / that bodily peyne / stant in disciplyne or techyng / by word and by writyng / or in ensample. / Also in weryng of heyres or of stamyn / or of haubergeons on hire naked flessĥ for cristes sake / and swiche manere penances. [1053] but war thee wel that swiche manere penañces on thy flessĥ / ne make thee nat' or angry or anoyed of thy self/. for bettre / is to caste away thyn heyre. than for to caste away / the siker- nesse of Ihesu crist [1054] ¶ And therefore seith seint Paul /. Clothe yow as they that been chosen of god in herte. of Misericorde. debonairetee / suffrañce / and swich manere of clothynge. of whiche Ihesu crist is moore apayed / than of heyres or haubergeoñs / or hauberkes §

[1055] ¶ Thanne is discipline eek' in knockyng of thy brest/ in scourgyng with yerdes. in knelynges. in tribulacions §. [1056] in suffryng paciently wronges that been doon to thee. and eek/ in pacient suffrañce of maladies / or lesyng of worldly catel / or of wyf/ or of child / or other freendes

[1057] ¶ Thanne shaltow vnderstonde / whiche thynges destourben penañce. and this is in .iiij. maneres / that is. drede. shame. hope. and wanhope / that is desperacion)

[1058] ¶ And for to speke first/ of drede. for which he

and of the
remedie ther of

demeth that he may suffre no penaunce || [1059] ther
agayns is remedie for to thynke. that bodily penaunce / is
but short and litel at regard of the peynes of helle. that
is so cruell and so long / that it lasteth with-uten ende

¶ Of shame /
and of the
remedie ther of

[1060] ¶ Now again the shame / that a man hath to
shryuen hym. and namely thise ypocrites / that wolden
been holden so parfite / that they han no nede to shryuen
hem [1061] ¶ Agayns that shame. sholde a man thynke that
by wey of resoñ / that he þat hath nat been shamed to
doon foulè thinges / certes hym oghte nat been ashamed to
do faire thynges / and that is confессиōns [1062] ¶ A man
sholde eek thynke / that god seeth and woot alle hise
thoghtes and alle hise werkes / to hym may no thyng^e been
hyd ne couered [1063] ¶ Men sholden eek / remembre
hem of the shame that is to come at the day of doome to
hem that been nat penitent / And shryuen in this present
lyf. / [1064] ffor alle the creatures in erthe and in helle
shullen seen apertly / al that they hyden in this world

¶ Of hope & of
Surquiderie

[1065] ¶ Now for to speken of hope / of hem that
been necligent / and slowe to shryuen hem^s that stant in
two maneres. [1066] that oon is þat he hopeth for to lyue
longe and for to purchacen muche richesse for his delit/.
and thanne he wol shryuen hym. and as he seith /
hym semeth thanne tymely ynough to come to shrifte ||
[1067] Another is Surquidrie / that he hath in cristes

¶ Remedie agayn
necligent hope

mercy / [1068] ¶ Agayns the firste vice. he shal thynke /
that oure lif is in no sikernesse. and eek that alle the
richesses in this world / ben in auenture and passen as a
shadwe on the wal. [1069] and as seith seint Gregorie. /
that it aperteneth to the grete rightwisnesse of god. that
neuere shal the peyne stynte. of hem þat neuere
wolde withdrawen hem fro synne hir thanks / but
ay continue in synne. ffor thilke perpetueel wil to do
synne / shul they han perpetueel peyne

¶ Sanctus
Gregorius

¶ Of wanhope in
two maneres

[1070] ¶ Wanhope is in two maneres. the firste wan-
hope is in the mercy of crist ||. that oother is / þat they

thynken / þat they ne mygh̄te nat longe perseuere in good-
 nesse [1071] ¶ The firste wanhope comth / of that he ¶ Of the firste
 demeth that he hath synned so greetly and so ofte / and so wanhope
 longe leyn in synne / that he shal nat be saued
 [1072] ¶ Certes agayns that cursed wanhope sholde he ¶ Remedium
 thynke that the passion of Ihesu crist/ is moore strong^r for
 to vnbynde / than synne is strong / for to bynde
 [1073] ¶ Agayns the seconde wanhope / he shal thynke / ¶ Remedie /
 that as ofte as he falleth. he may arise agayn by penitence / agayn the .ij^{de}.
 wanhope
 And though̄ he neuer so longe haue leyn in synne / the
 mercy of crist is alwey redy to receiuen hym to mercy
 [1074] ¶ Agayns the wanhope / þat he demeth / that he ¶ Remedie
 sholde nat longe perseuere in goodnesse. he shal thynke / agayn the thridde
 wanhope
 þat the feblesse of the deuēl may no thyng doon / but if
 men wol suffren hym [1075] and eek/ he shal han strengthe
 of the helpe of god / and of al hooly chirche / and of the
 protecciōn of Aungels / if hym list^r

[1076] ¶ Thanne shal men vnder^lstonde / what is the ¶ What the fruyt
 fruyt^r of penañce And after the word of Ihesu crist^r it is of penañce is.
 the endeles blisse of heuene. [1077] ther ioye hath no
 contrarioustee of wo ne greuañce. ther alle harmes been
 passed of this present lyf / ther as is the sikernesse / fro
 the peyne of helle. ther as is the blisful compaignye that
 reioysen hem eueremo euerich of otheres ioye. [1078] ther
 as the body of man / that whilom was foul and derk/. is
 moore cleer than the sonne. ther/ as the body that whilom
 was syk/ freele / & fieble / and mortal / is immortal and
 so strong/ and so hool / that ther may no thyng apeyren
 it. [1079] ther as ne is / neither hunger / thurst^r ne cold^r
 but euery soule replenyssed with the siḡhte of the parfit
 knowynge of god [1080] ¶ This blisful regne may men
 purchace by pouerte espritueel. and the glorie by lowe-
 nesse. the plentee of Ioye by hunger and thurst^r and the
 reste by trauaille /. and the lyf/ by mortificaciōn of
 synne ?

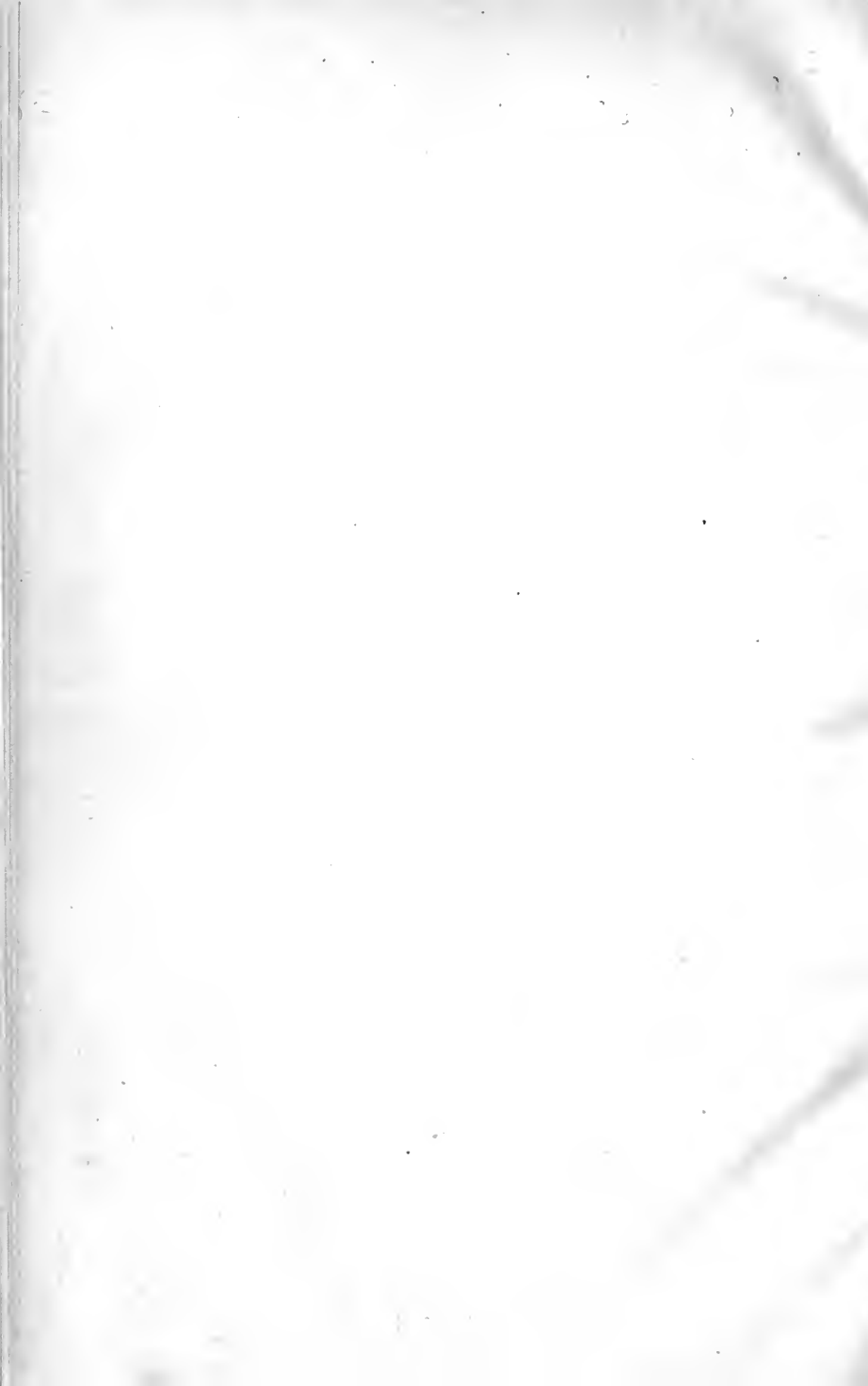
¶ Here taketh the makere of this book/ his leue 

[1081]
Now preye I to hem alle that herkne this litel tretys
 or rede that if ther be any thyng/ in it that liketh
 hem / that ther-of they thanken oure lord Ihesu
 crist. of whom procedeth al wit and al goodnesse.
 [1082] And if ther be any thyng^t that displese hem. I
 preye hem also that they arrette it to the defaute of myn
 vnkonnyng and nat to my wyl. that wolde ful fayn haue
 seyde better / if I hadde had konnyng. [1083] ffor oure
 boke seith / al that is writen / is writen for oure
 doctrine. and that is myn entente [1084] ¶ Wherfore / I
 biseke yow mekely for the *mercy* of god / that ye preye for
 me / that crist haue *mercy* on me and foryeue me my
 giltes. || [1085] and namely of my translacions and endit-
 ynges of worldly vanitees / the whiche I reuoke in my re-
 traccioñs [1086] ¶ As is the book of Troilus ¶ The book
 also of ffame || The book of the .xxv. Ladies ¶ The
 book of the Duchesse ¶ The book of saint Valentynes
 day of the *parlement* of briddes ||. The tales of Caunter-
 bury / thilke that sownen in to synne [1087] ¶ The book
 of the Leoñ And many another book/ if they were in my
 remembrance / and many a song and many a lecherous
 lay. that crist for his grete *mercy* foryeue me the synne
 [1088] ¶ But of the *translacion* of Boece de consolacione /
 and othere bookes of Legendes of seintes / and Omelies /
 and moralitee / and deuocion / [1089] that thanke I oure
 lord Ihesu crist and his blisful mooder / and alle the
 seintes of heuene / [1090] bisekyng hem / þat they from
 hennes forth vn-to my lyues ende / sende me *grace* to
 biwayle my giltes / and to studie to the saluacion of my
 soule / and graunte me *grace* of verrey penitence / con-

fessioñ and satisfaccioñ to doon in this present lyf /
 [1091] thurgh the benigne grace / of hym þat is kyng' of
 kynges / and preest/ ouer alle preestes / that boghte vs
 with the precious blood of his herte / [1092] so þat I may
 been oon of hem at the day of doome that shulle bé saued ?
 Qui cum patre &cetera

¶ Heere is ended the book/ of the tales of Caunter-
 bury / compiled by Geffrey Chaucer / of whos
 soule Ihesu crist/ haue mercy Amen 𐄂

[4 fly-leaves follow, more or less scribbled-on with later verses, &c. On the back of the 3rd is a list of the Tales, and on the front of the 4th is a late 15th-century copy of Chaucer's 'Truth'—"Fle fro the prees and dwelle with sothfastnesse," without the Envoy. Other lines follow this.]



ELLESMERE APPENDIX ¹

OF PIECES AND CUTS NOT IN THE ELLESMERE MS.

- | | PAGE |
|--|--------|
| 1. Appendix to Group A: the spurious <i>Tale of Gamelyn</i> , from MS. Reg. 18 C ii, in the British Museum | 1*-26* |
| 2. The genuine <i>Man-of-Law—Shipman Link</i> , Group B, § 3, p. 167 Six-Text, from MS. Arch. Selden, B 14, in the Bodleian Library. ('T would have followd p. 166 above, had it been in the Ellesmere MS.) | 27* |
| 3. The genuine <i>Nun's-Priest's End-Link</i> , Group B, § 15, p. 301 Six-Text, from MS. Dd. 4. 24, in the Cambridge University Library. ('T would have followd p. 523 above, had it been in the Ellesmere MS.) | 28* |
| 4. Drawings of 6 <i>Tellers of 6 of the Canterbury Tales</i> —the Cook, Wife of Bath, Summoner, Pardoner, Monk, and Manciple,—and of 6 allegorical Figures—Wrath and Mercy, Gluttony and Abstinence, Lechery and Chastity—copied from MS. Gg. 4. 27, in the Cambridge University Library, and cut on wood by Mr. W. H. Hooper | 29* |

¹ None of the pieces 1, 2, 3, is in the best MSS. of the A type.



THE MAN-OF-LAW—SHIPMAN LINK.

Here endith the man of lawe his tale. And // next
folwith the Shipman his prolog.

OVre Ost vppon his stiropes / stood anoon
and seide good men herkeneth euerychoon
this was a thrifty tale / for the nonys
Sir parisshe preste *quod* he / for godis bonys 1166
telle vs a tale / as was thi forward yore
I se wel / that ye lernede men in lore
can meche good / bi godis dignite
the parson him answerde / benedicite 1170
What ey leth the man / so synfully to swere
oure Ost answerde / O Iankyn be ye there
I smelle a lollere in the wynde *quod* he
Howe goodmen *quod* oure Ost / herkeneth me 1174
a-bide for godis digne passion
for we shul han / a predicacion
this lollere here / wol prechen vs somewhat
nay bi godis soule / that shal he nat 1178
Seide the Shipman / here shal he not preche
he shal no gospel glosen here / ne teche
We leuen alle / in the grete god *quod* he
He wolde sowen / som difficulte 1182
or sprengen Cokkel / in oure clene corn
and therefore Ost / I warne the biforn
my ioly body / shal a tale telle
and I shal clynkyn yow / so mery a belle 1186
that I shal wakyn / al this companye
but it shal not ben / of Philosophie
ne phislyas / ne termes queynte of lawe
ther is but litil latyn / in my mawe . 1190

Here endith the Shipman his prolog. And next fol-
wyng he bigynneth his tale &c.

3.

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S END-LINK.

[*Camb. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24, on leaf 195.*]

[Sire Nonnes Preest / oure hoost seide a-noon
 I-blissed be thy breche / & euery ston
 This was a murie tale / of Chauntecleer
 But by my trouthe / if þou were seculer 4640
 Thow woldest ben a trefoul / a right
 ffor if þou haue corage / as þou hast myght
 The were nede of hennes / as I wene
 3a / moo than seuene tymes / seuentene 4644
 Se which braunes / hath this gentil Preest [*leaf 195, back*]
 So gret a nekke / & swich a large breest
 He loketh as a sparhauke / with hise eyen
 Him nedeth nat / his colour for to dyghen 4648
 With brasile / ne with greyn of Portyngale
 Now sire / faire falle 3ow / for 3oure tale
 And after that / he with ful merie chere 4651
 Seide vn-to a nother / as 3e shuln heere] [*Camb. Dd. 4. 24 extract stops*]

[*Group G (Second Nun and Canon's Yeoman) imperfect,
 follows in the MS.*]

DRAWINGS OF THE 23 TELLERS

OF THE

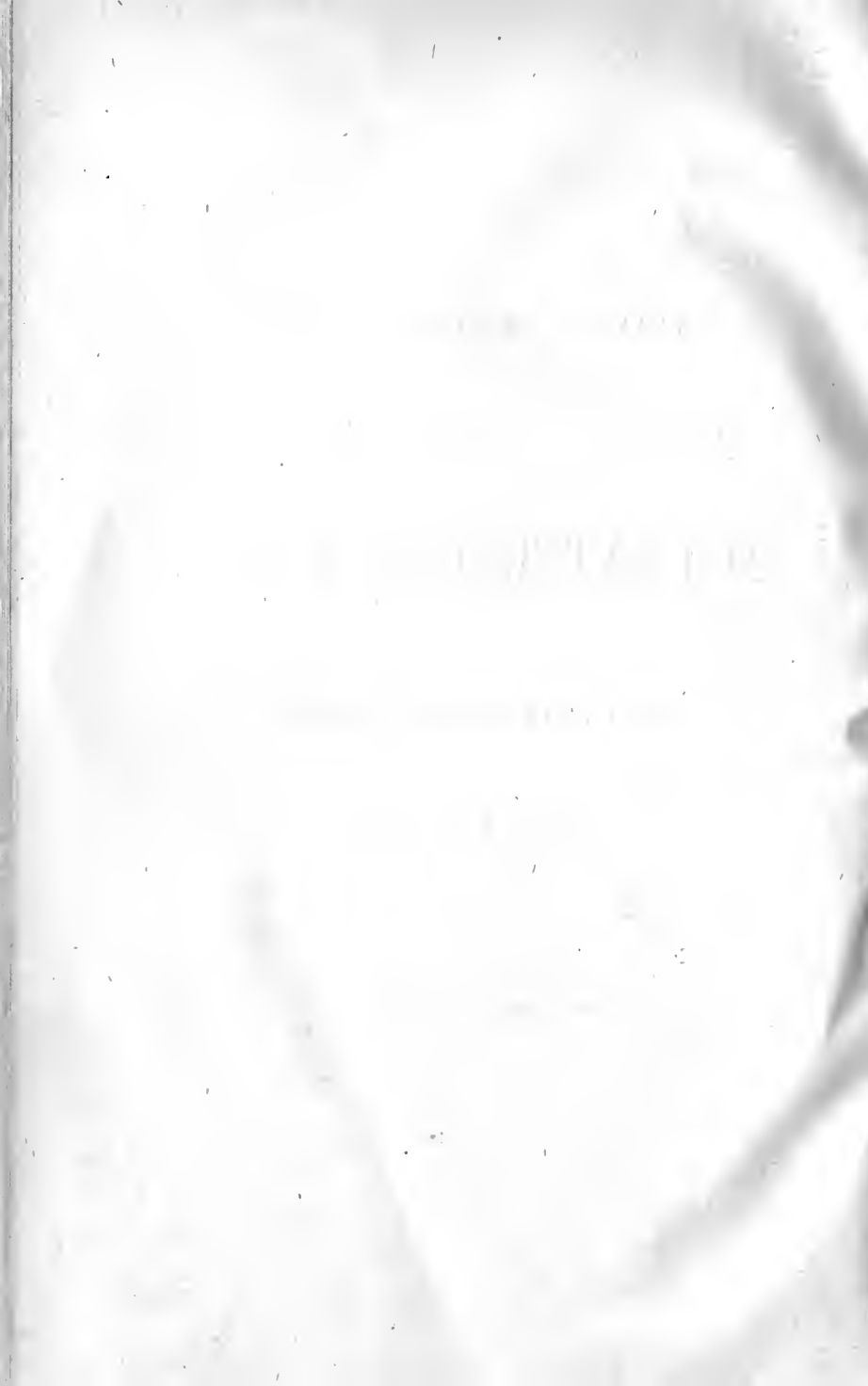
24 CANTERBURY TALES,

COPIED FROM THE ELLESMERE MS,

AND CUT ON WOOD,

BY

Mr W. H. Hooper.



106

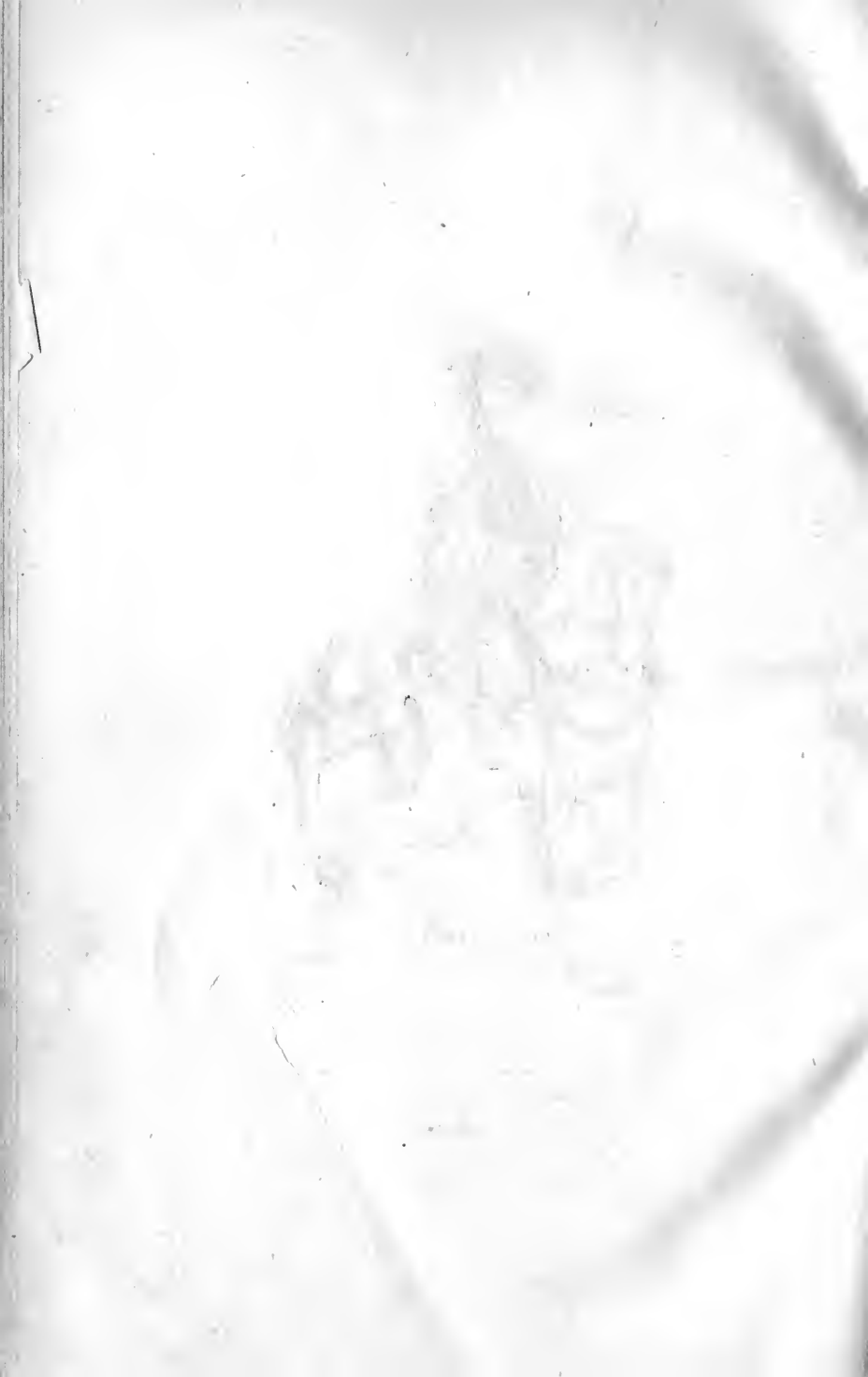
In this first issue, 1871, only 14 of the Cuts are given. The other 10 will follow in 1872. When the print of each MS is bound, the cut of each Teller of a Tale can be put at the beginning of his Tale, as in the Ellesmere MS; or by his description in the General Prologue, to contrast the artist's hand with the poet's; or, all the cuts can be put together before or after the Prologue, or at the end of the volume (as not part of the MS), according to the fancy of each Member.





THE MILLERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 38, back.

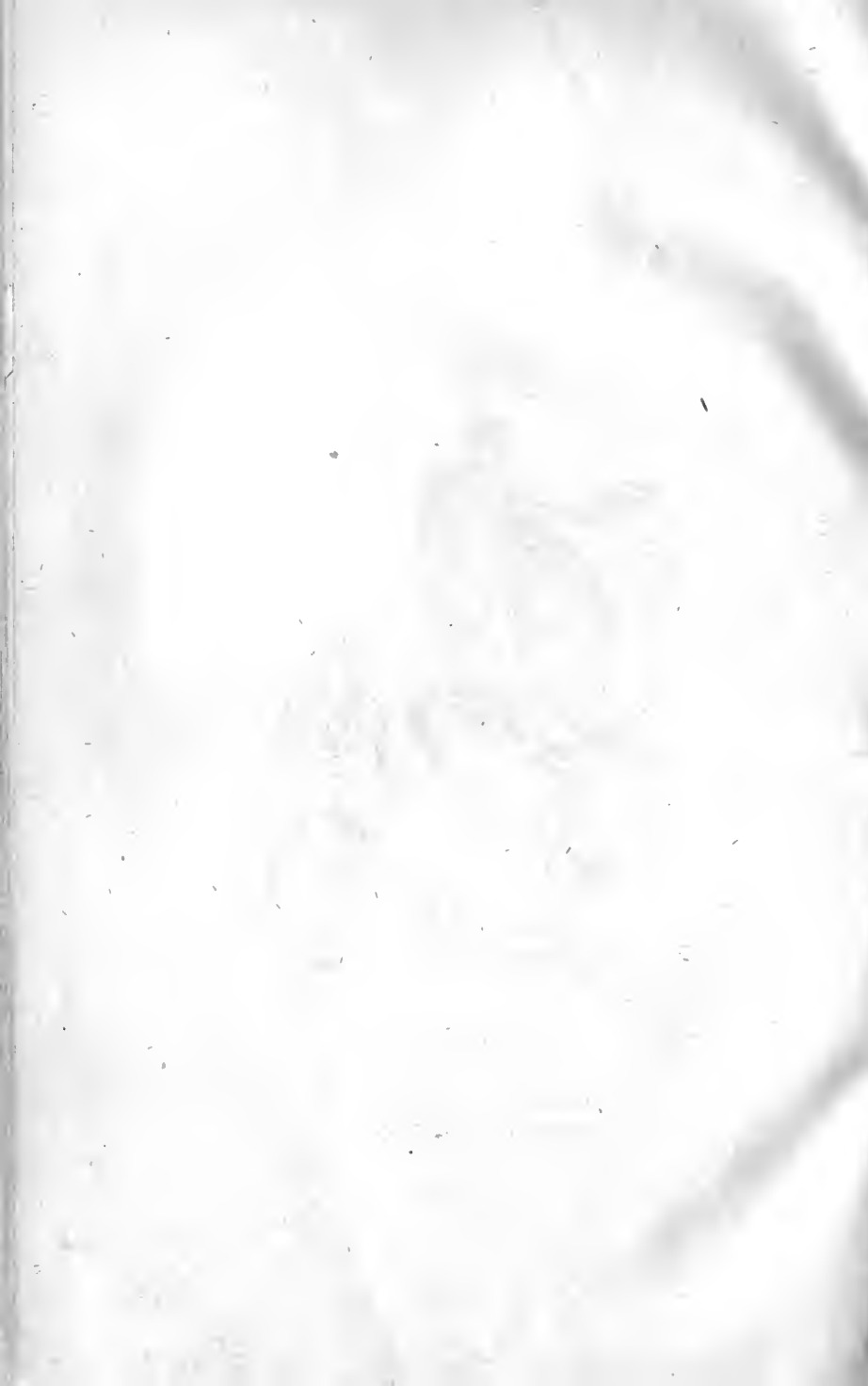




THE KNYGHT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 14.

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, P for *Miles*—
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)





THE COOK.
Ellesmere MS, leaf 51.



f



THE REVE.
Ellesmere MS, leaf 46.





THE WYF OF BATHE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 76.





THE MAN OF LAWE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 54, back.





THE FRERE.

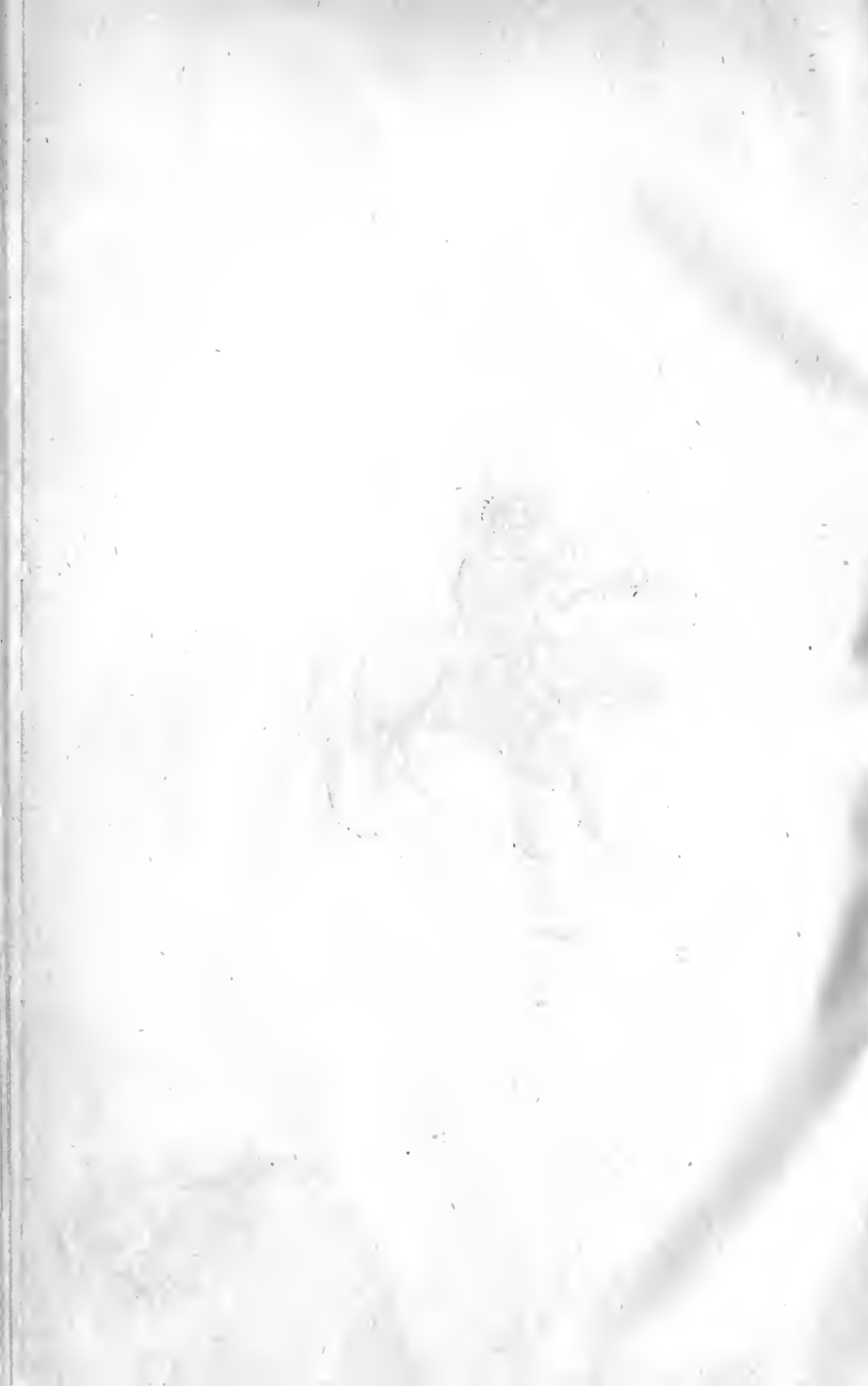
Ellesmere MS, leaf 80, back.





THE SOMONOUR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 85, back.





THE CLERK OF OXFORD.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 92.





THE SHIPMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 147, back.





THE PRIORESSE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 152, back.



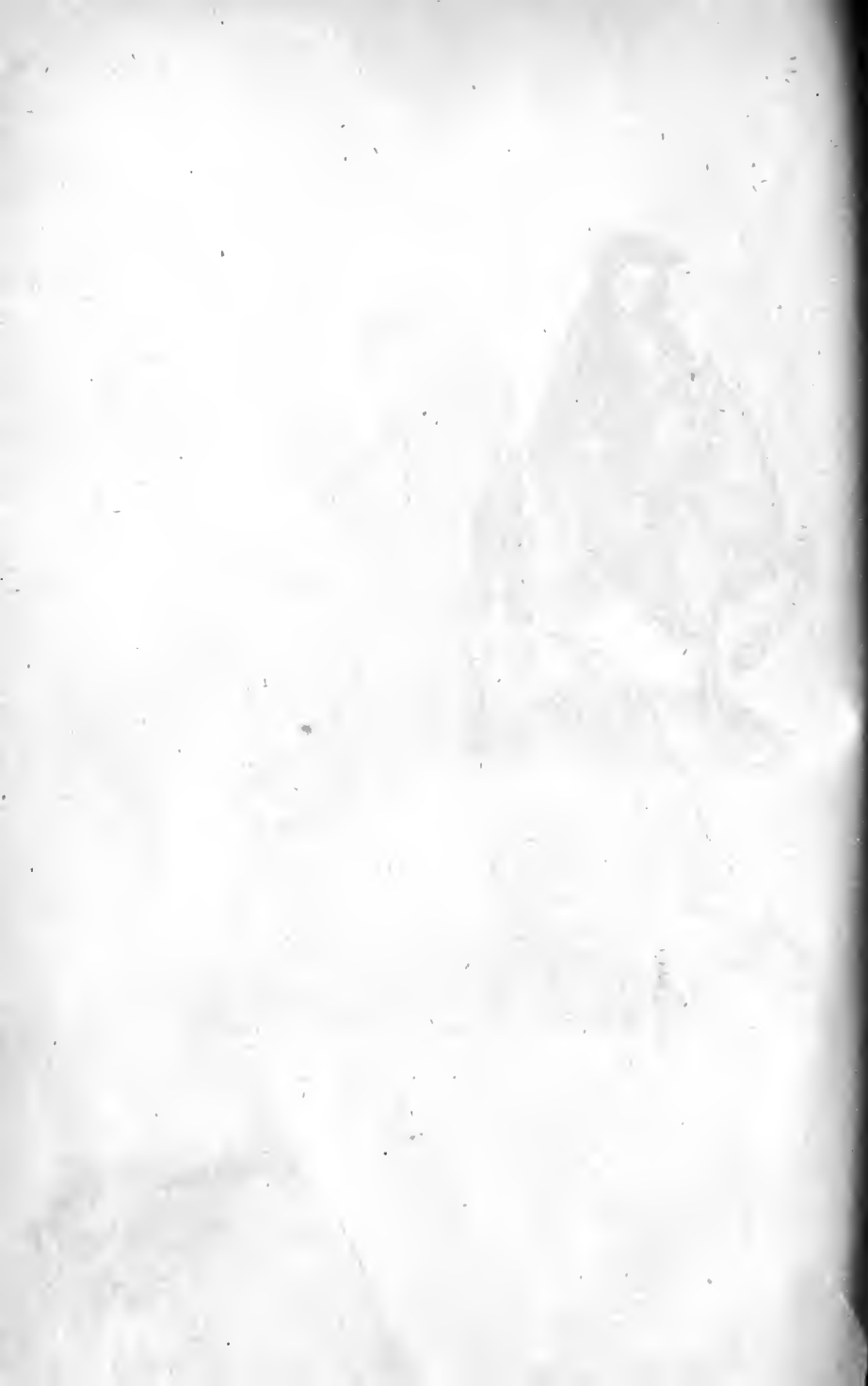


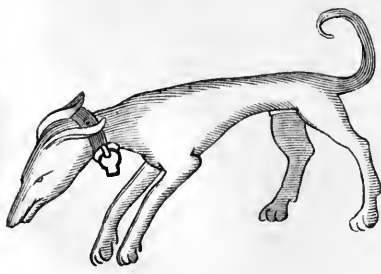
CHAUCER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 157, back.

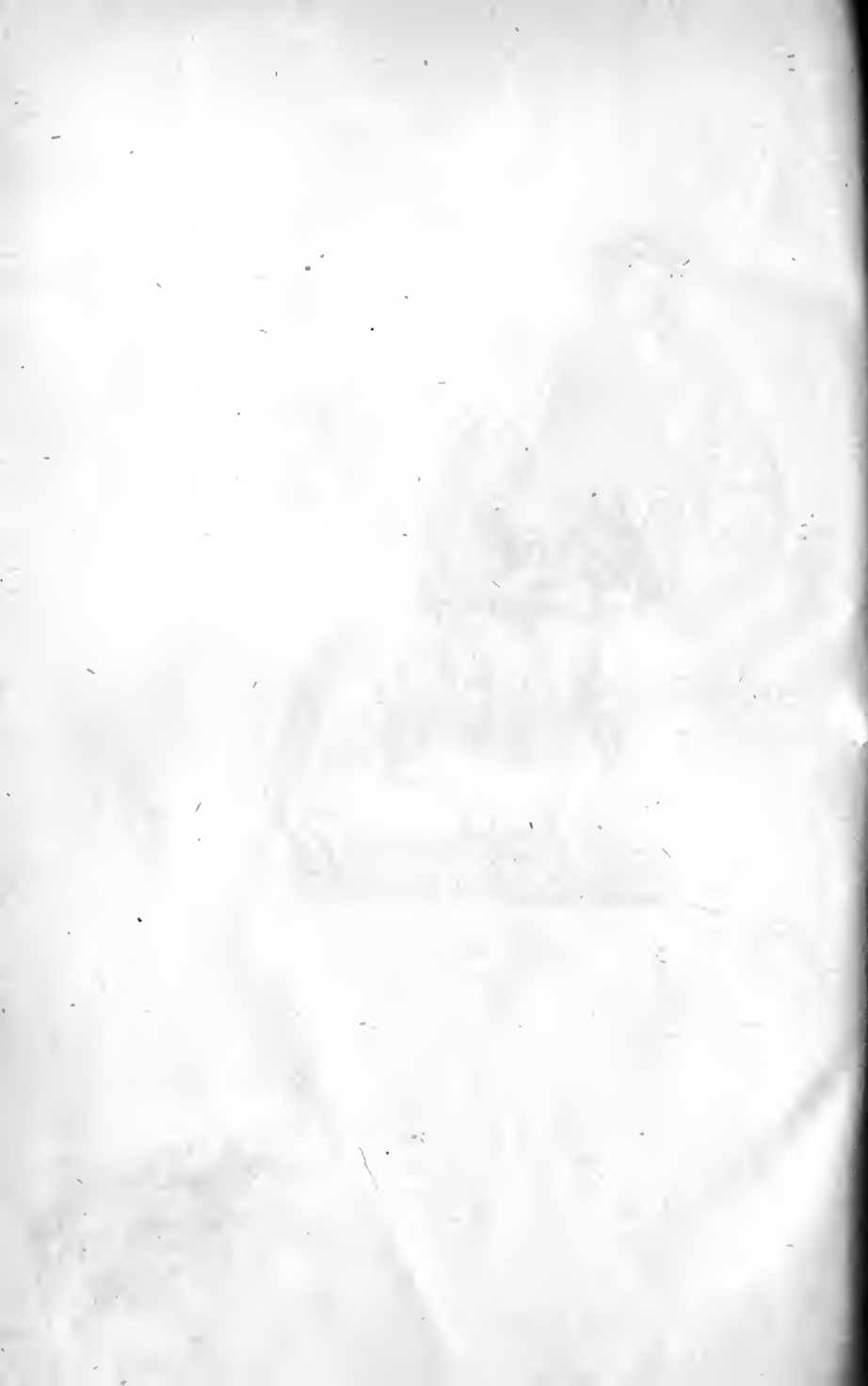
X

11





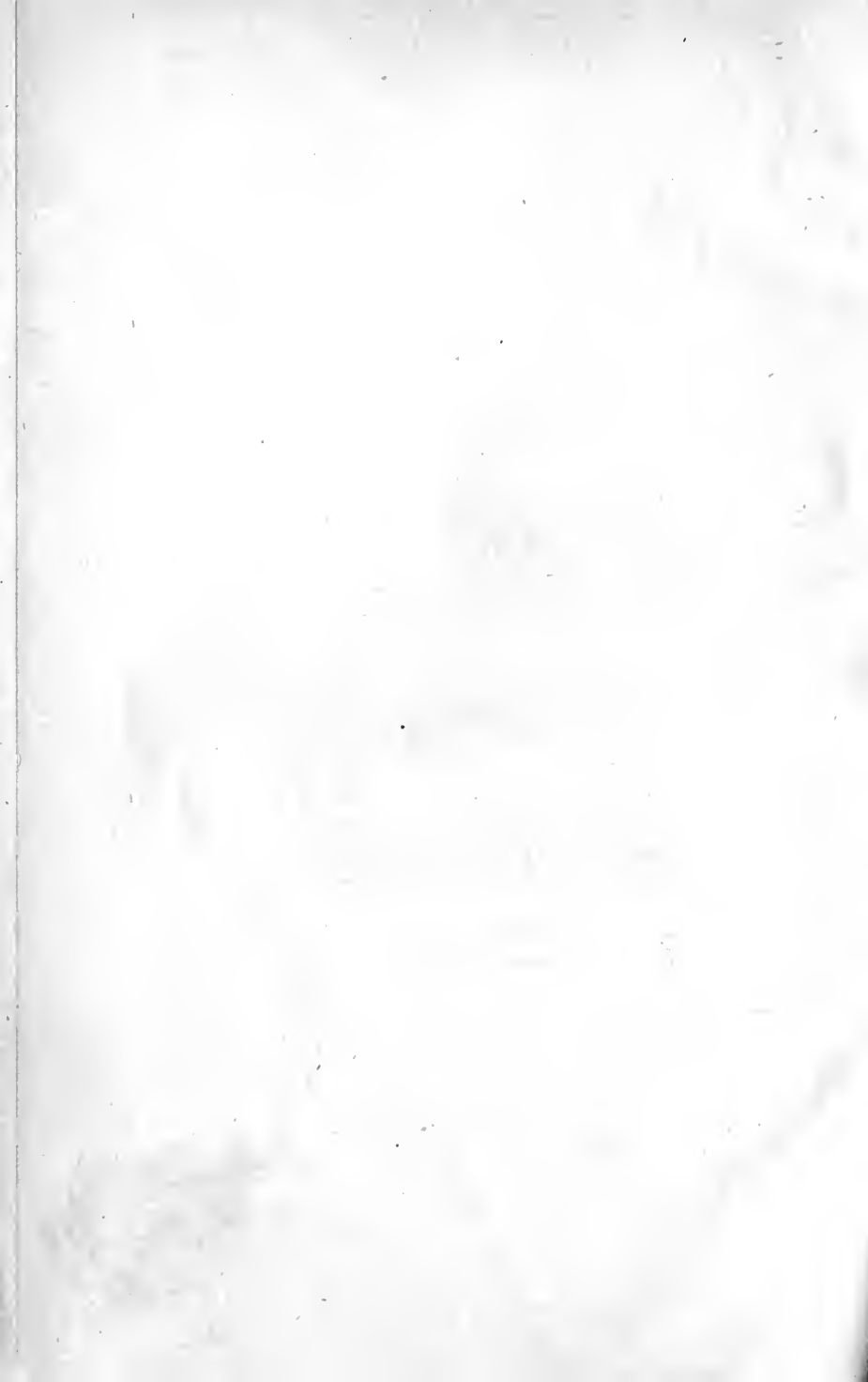
THE MONK.
Ellesmere MS, leaf 173.





THE NONNES PREEST.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 183.





THE MERCHANT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 106, back.





THE SQUIRE.

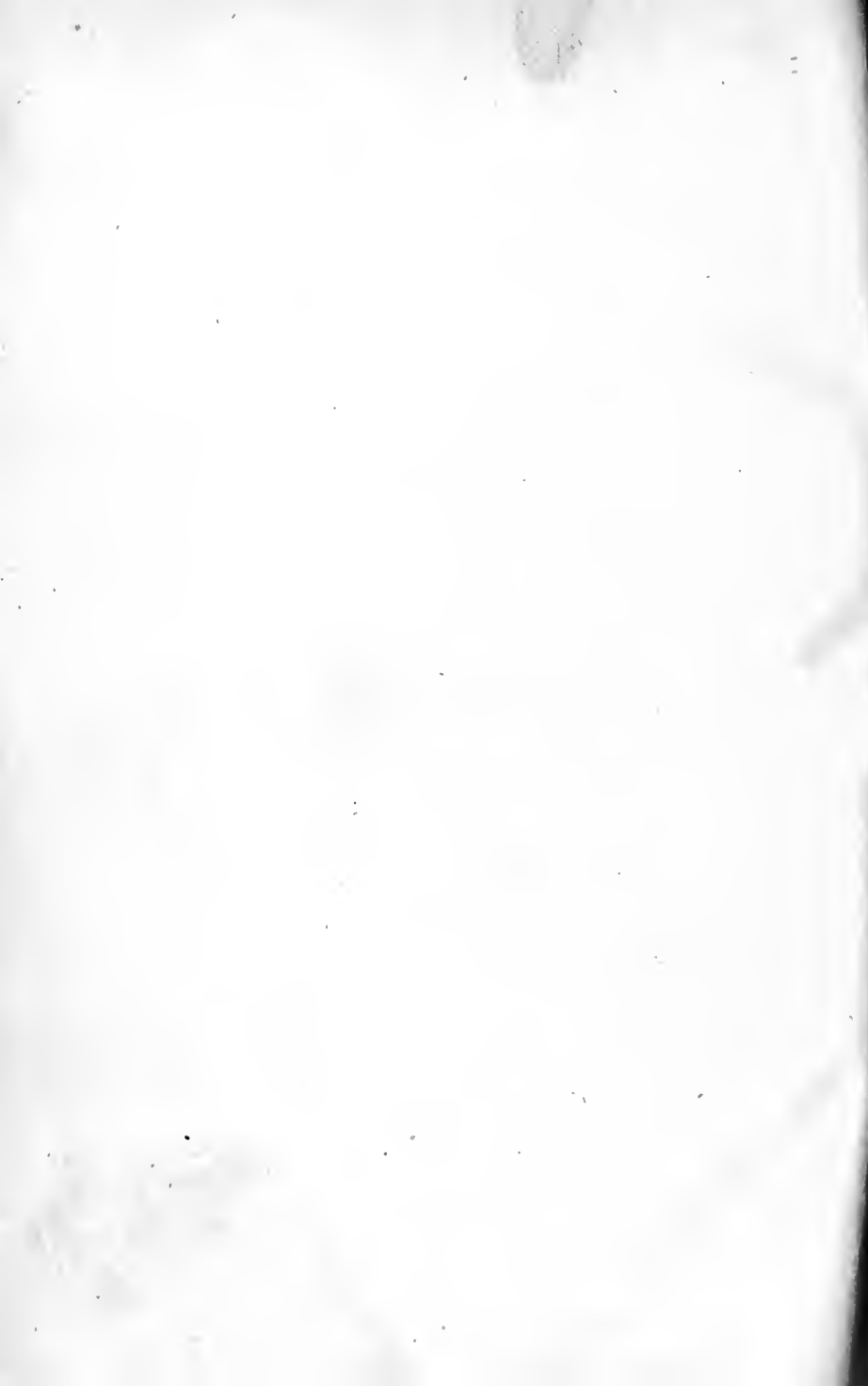
Ellesmere MS, leaf 119, back.





THE FRANKLIN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 127, back.

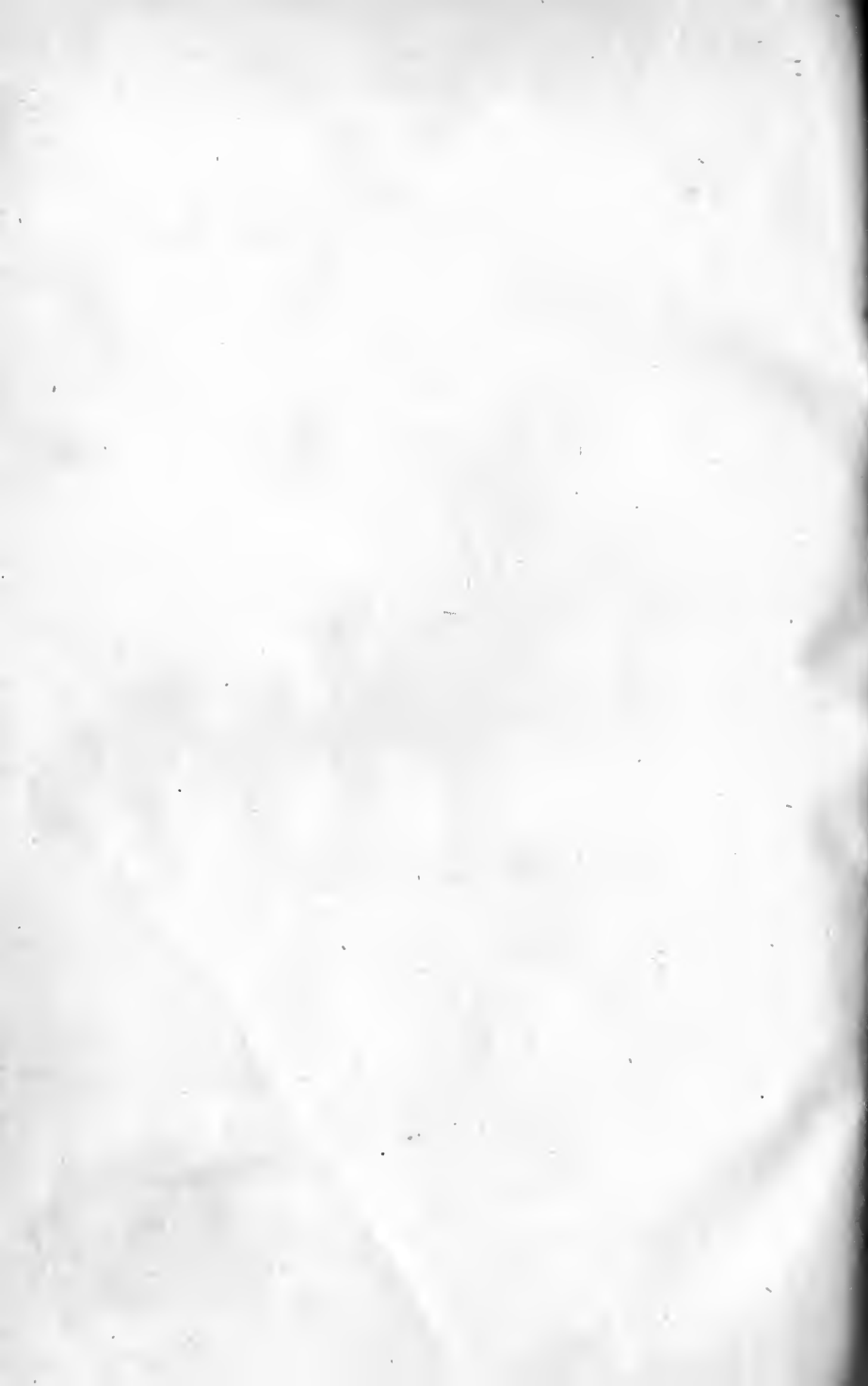


+



THE DOCTOR.

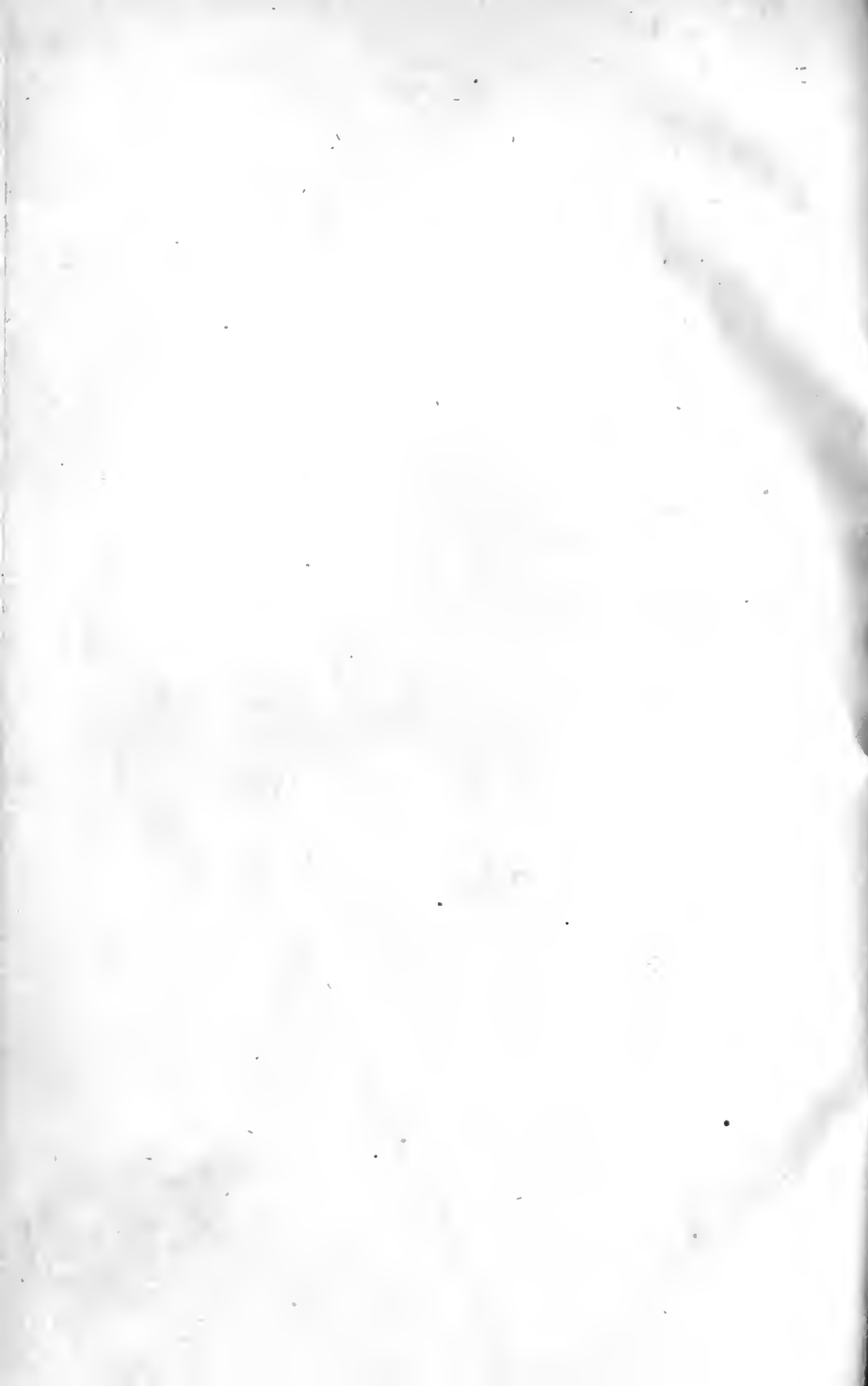
Ellesmere MS, leaf 137.





THE PARDONER.

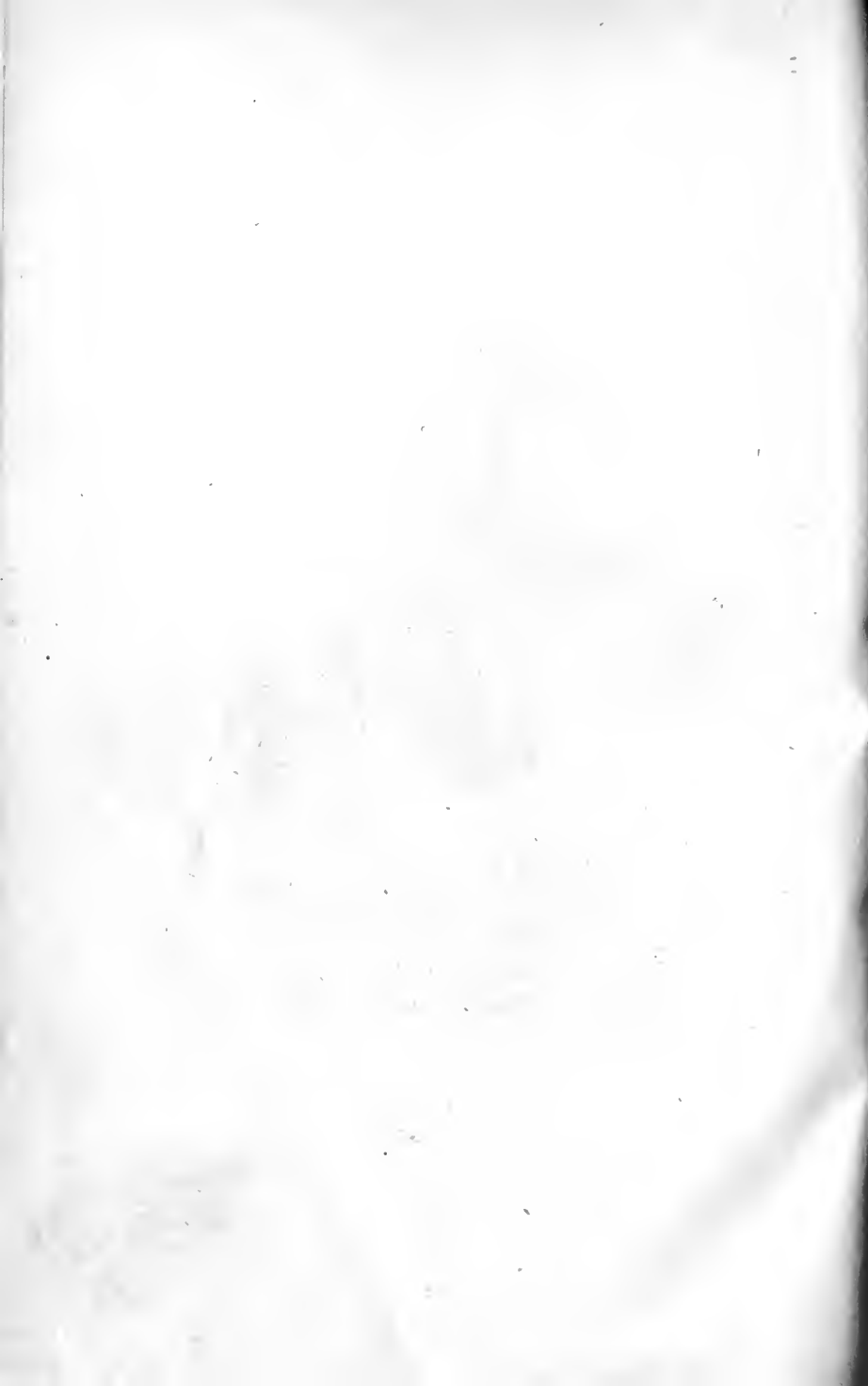
Ellesmere MS, leaf 142.





THE SECOND NUN.

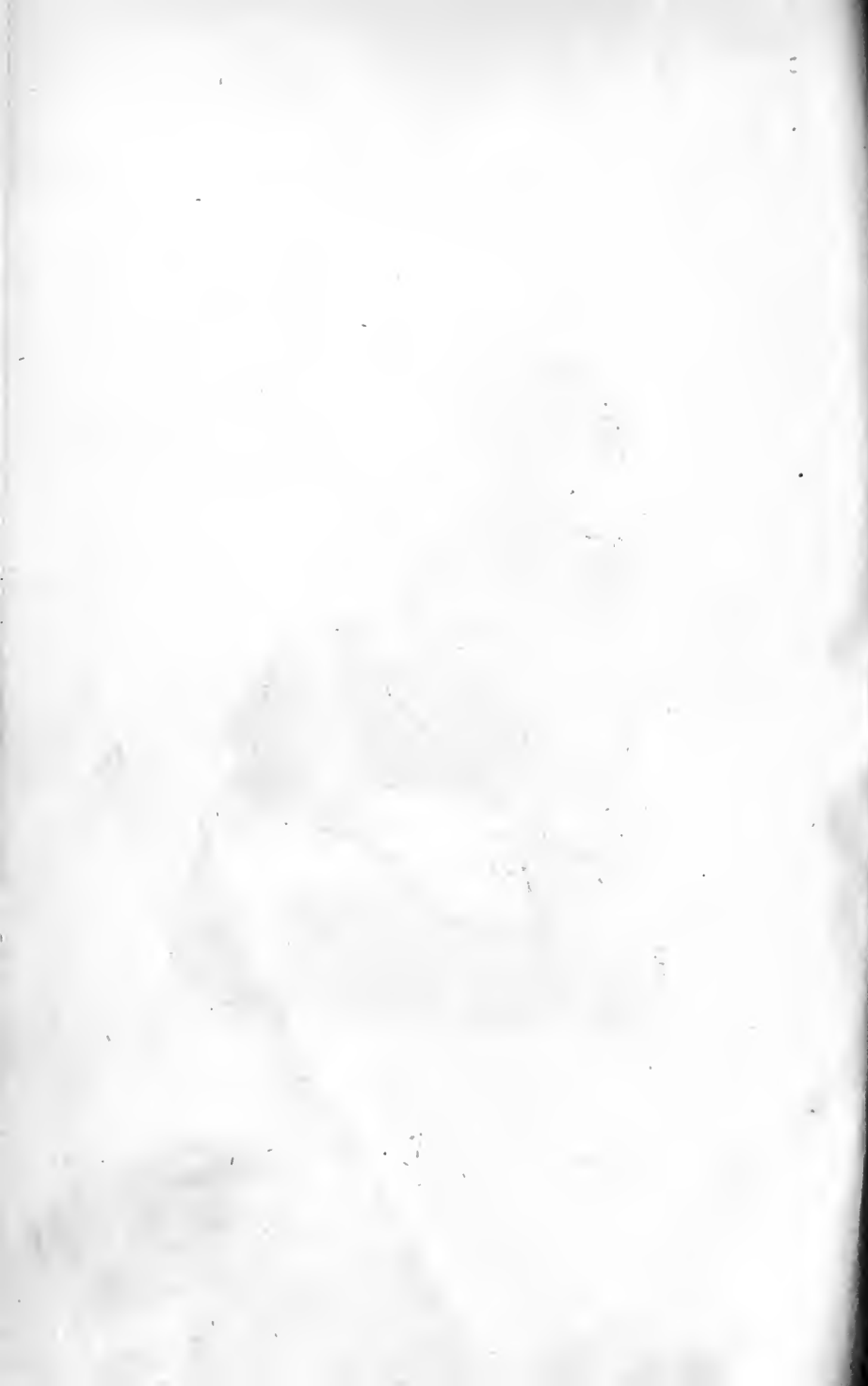
Ellesmere MS, leaf 191.





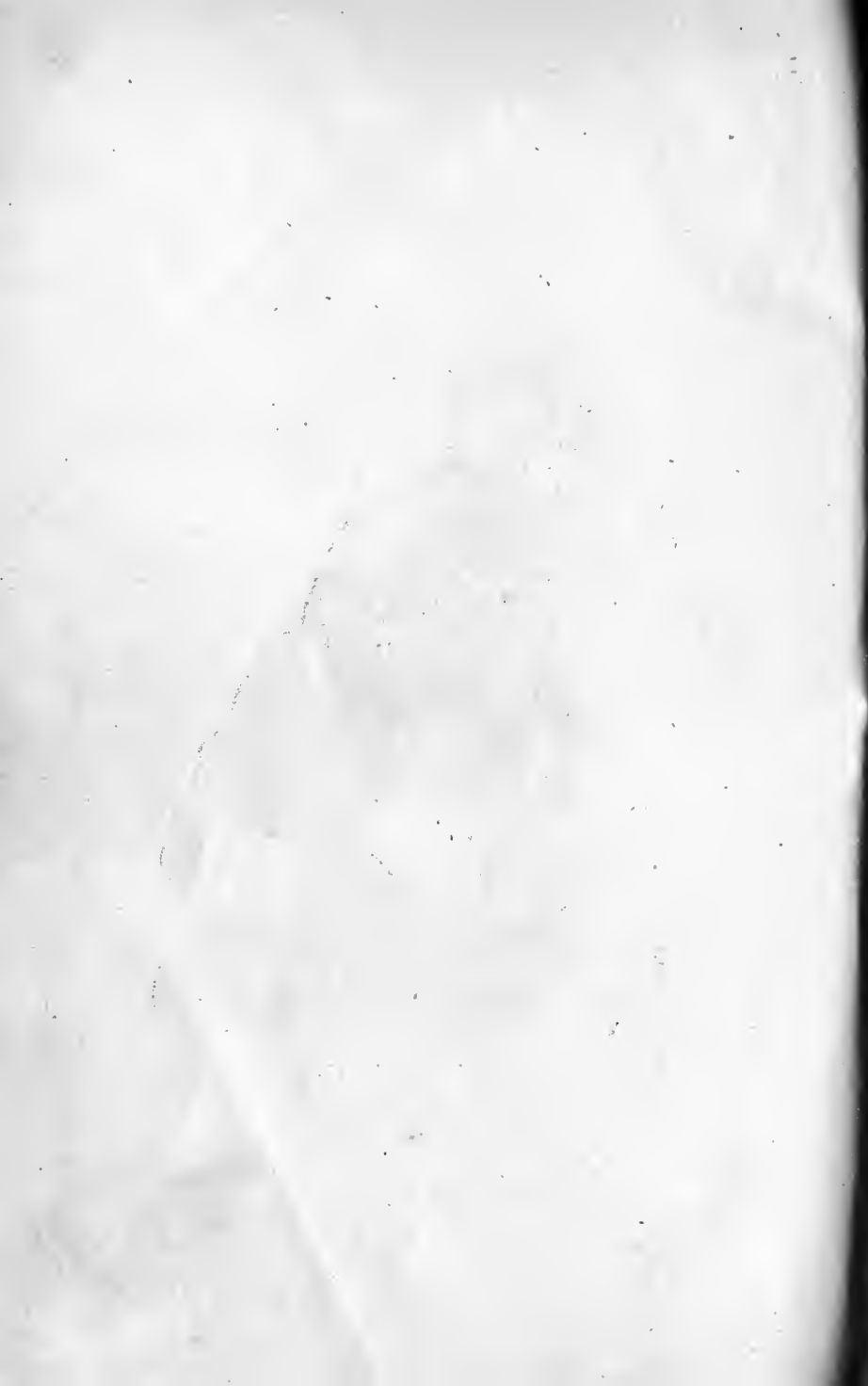
THE CANON'S YEOMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 198.





THE MANCIPIE.
Ellesmere MS, leaf 207.



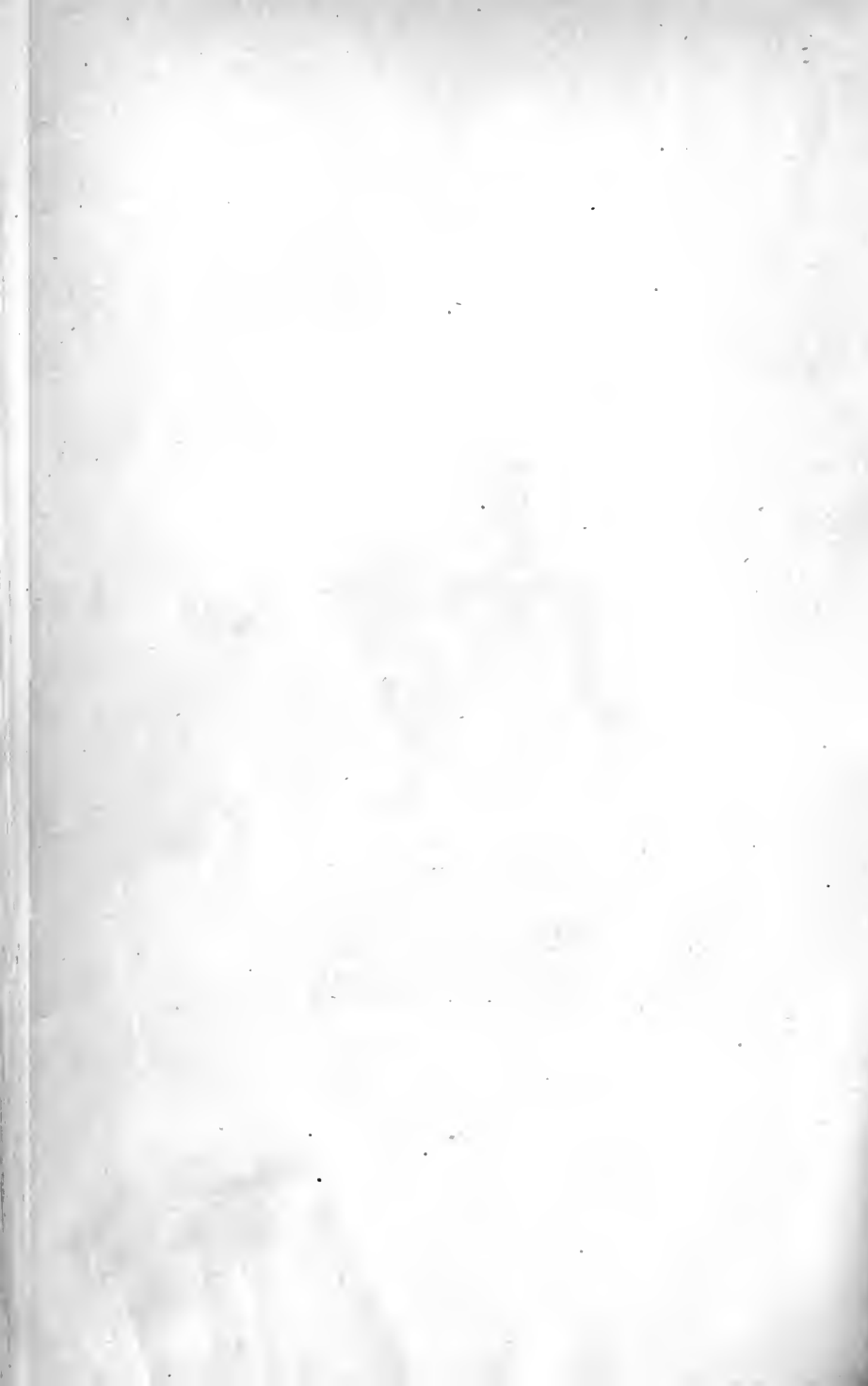


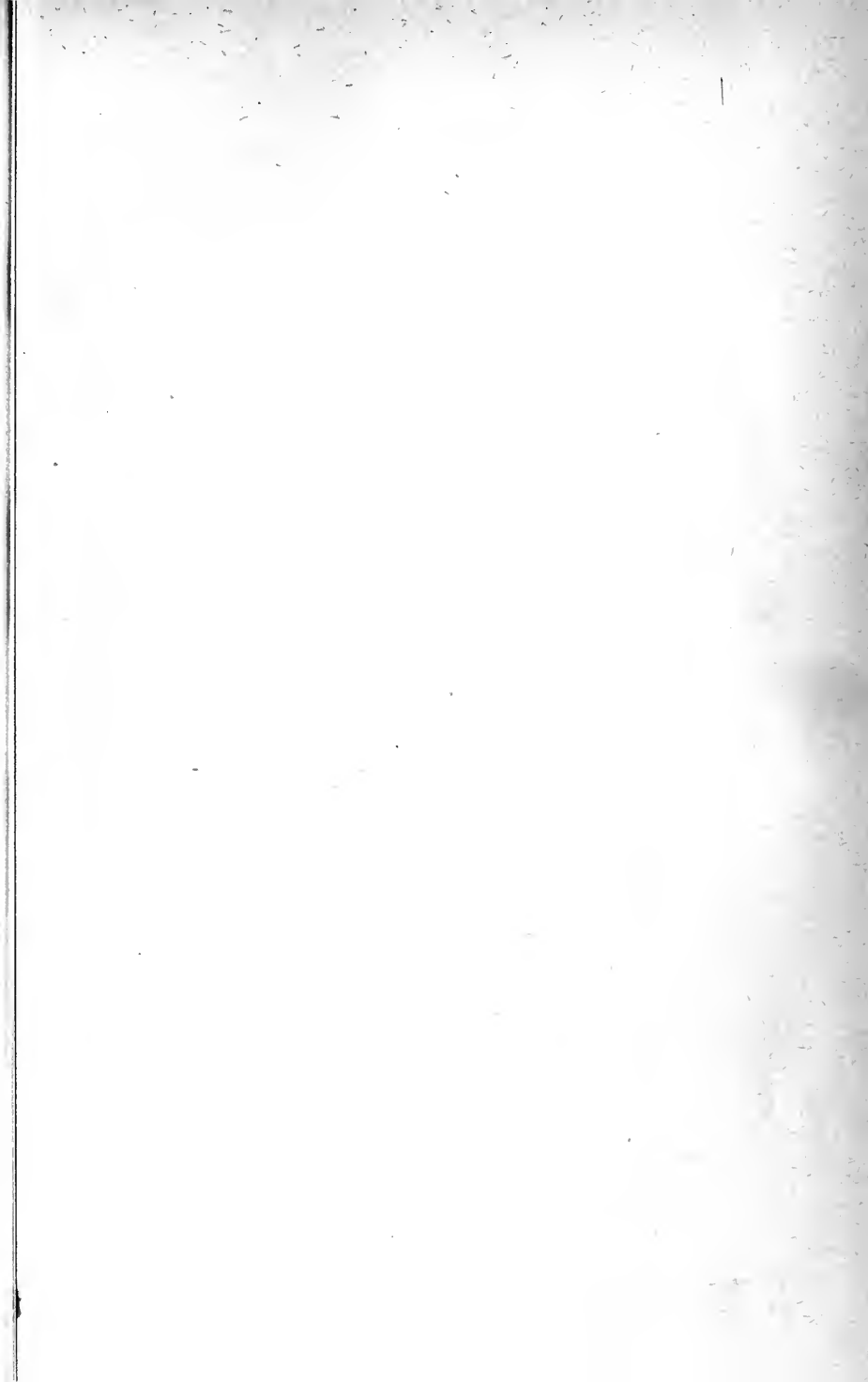
THE PARSON.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 210, back.

[These coloured figures in the Ellesmere MS have evidently been drawn by two different persons. The little pieces of ground on which the later hand places his figures, mark those done by him.

His drawing is not so good as the first hand's; and his colours are badly ground, and of poor quality.—W. H. HOOPER.]





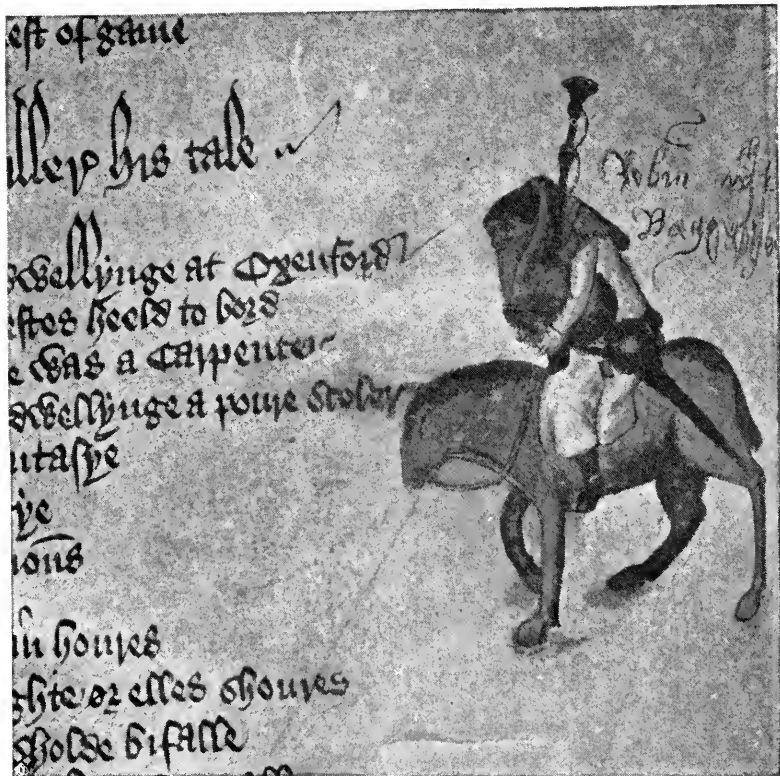
The Knight.



ELLESMERE MS.

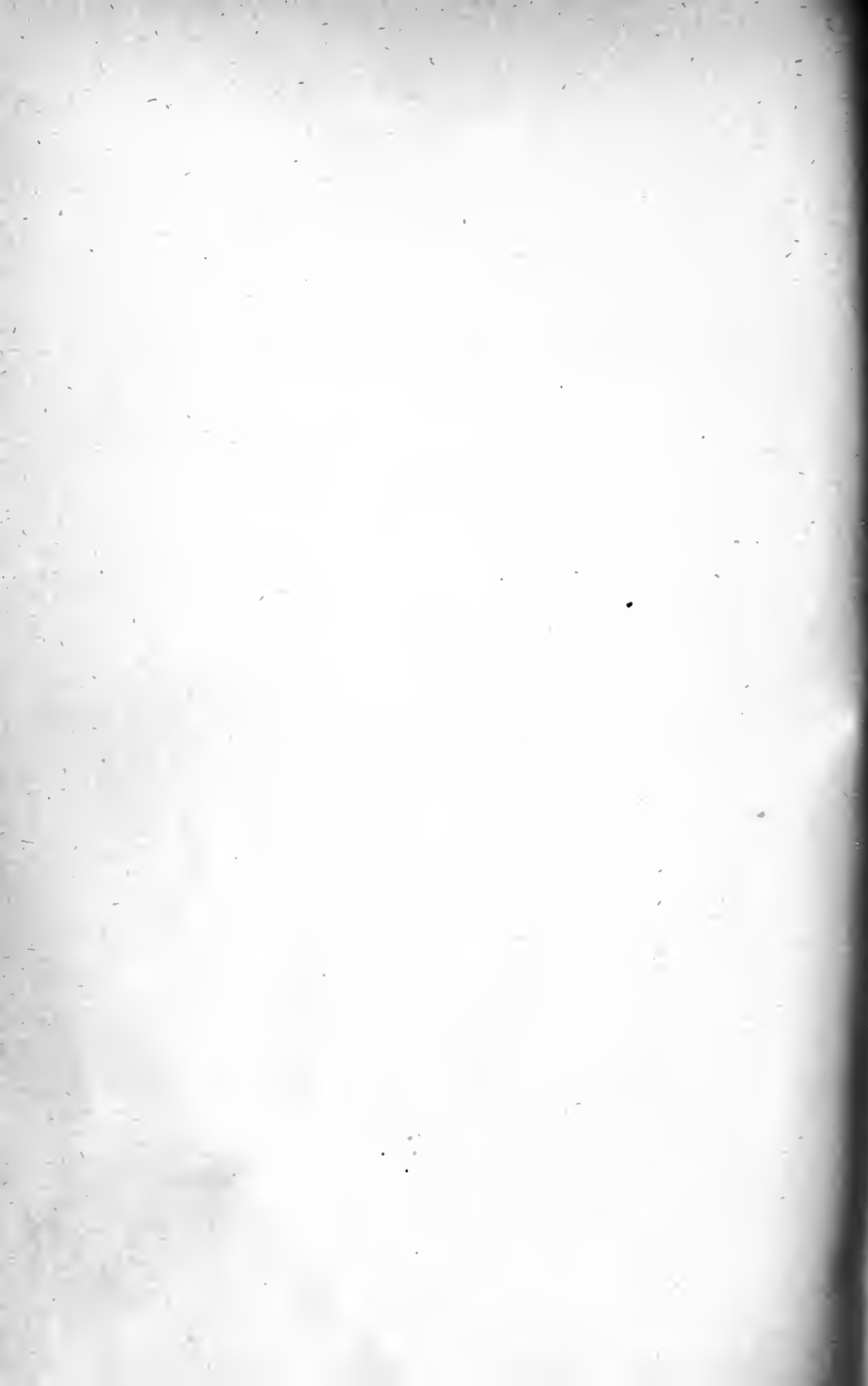
Leaf 14

The Miller.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 38, Back.



The Reve.



ELLESHERE MS.

Leaf 46.

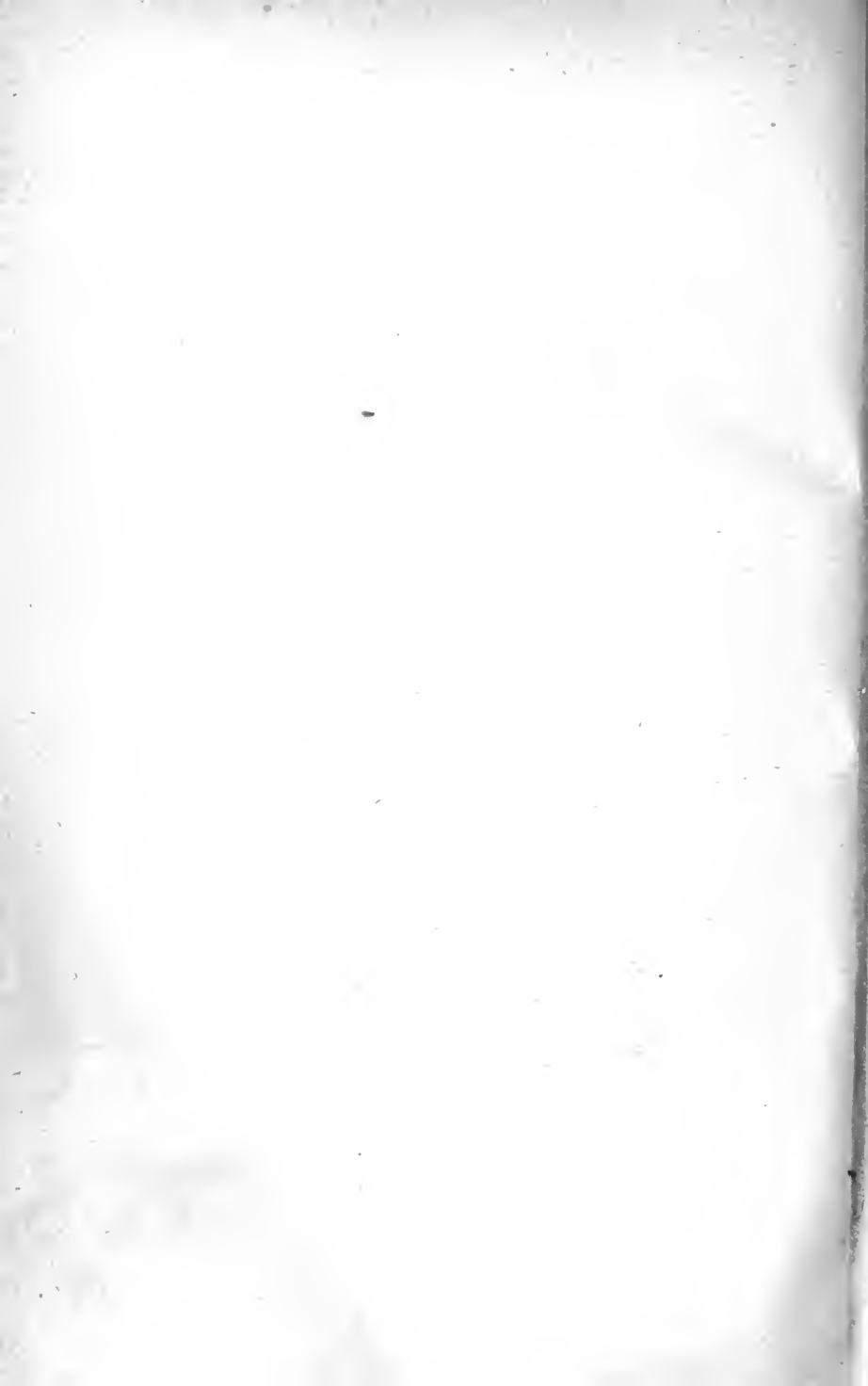
The Cook.



ELLESMERE MS.

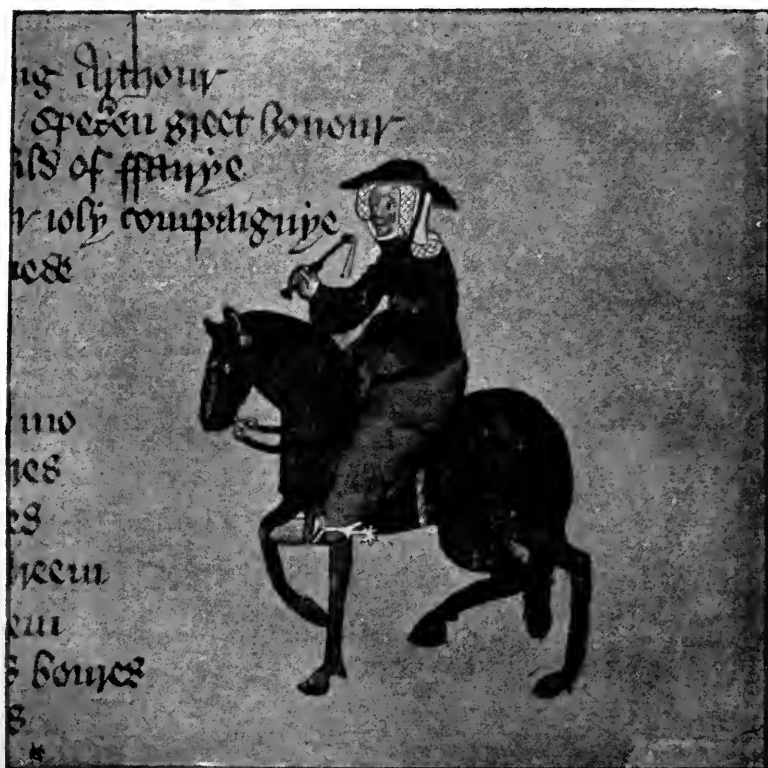
Leaf 51.







The Wife of Bath.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 76.

The Friar.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 80, Back.



The Sum'ner.



ELLESMERE MS.

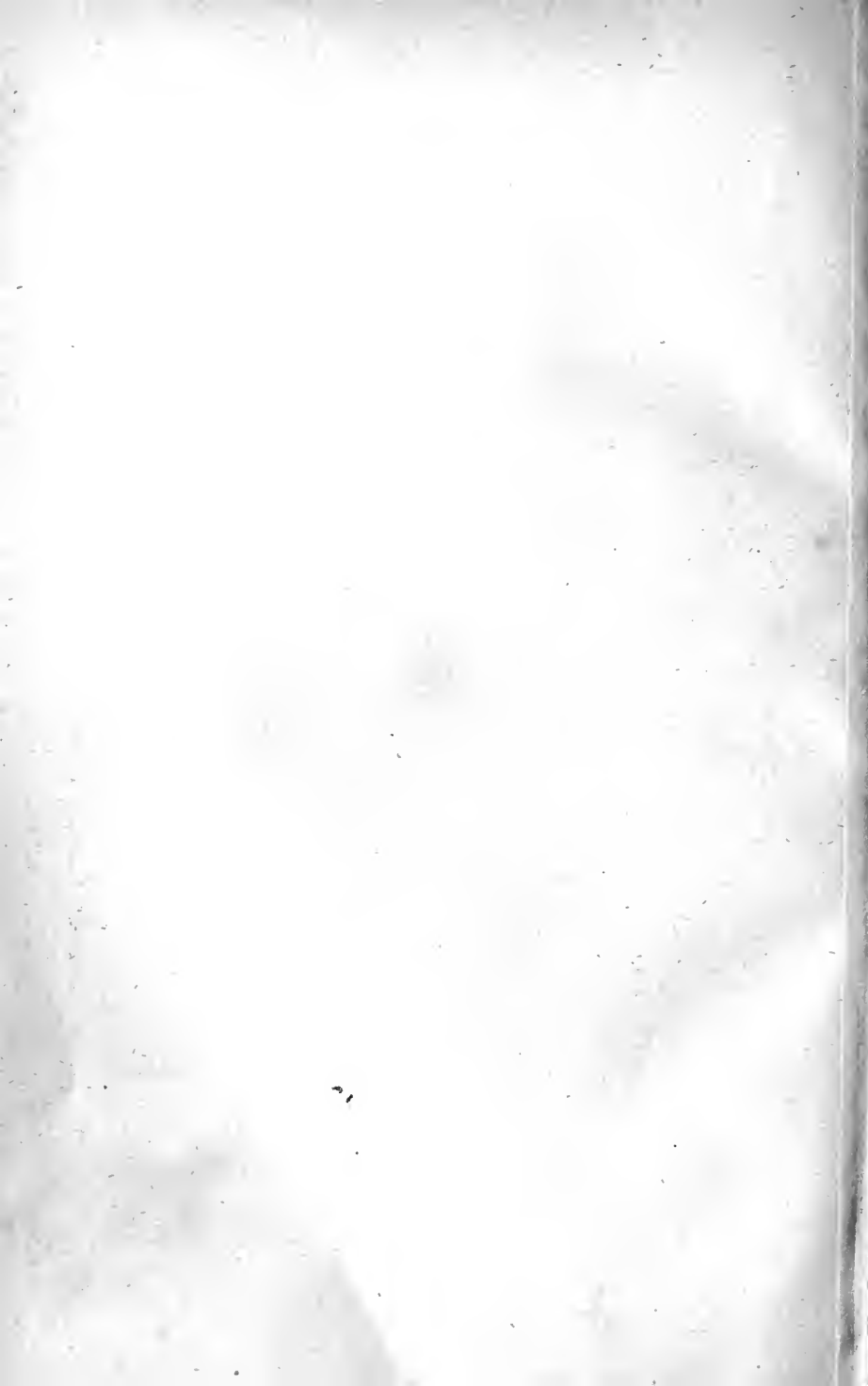
Leaf 85, Back.

17
The Clerk.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 92.



The Merchant.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 106, Back.

The Squire.

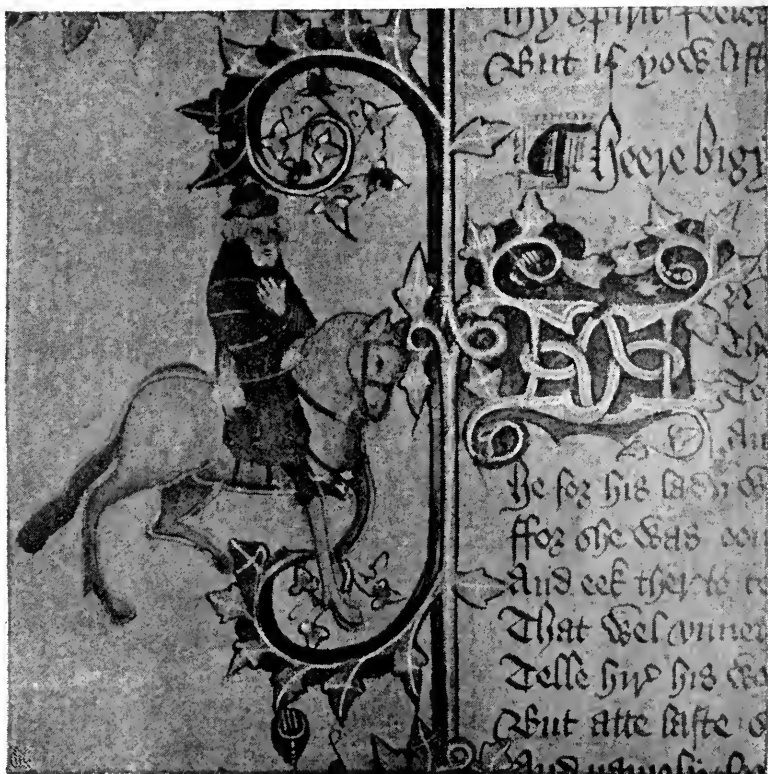
21

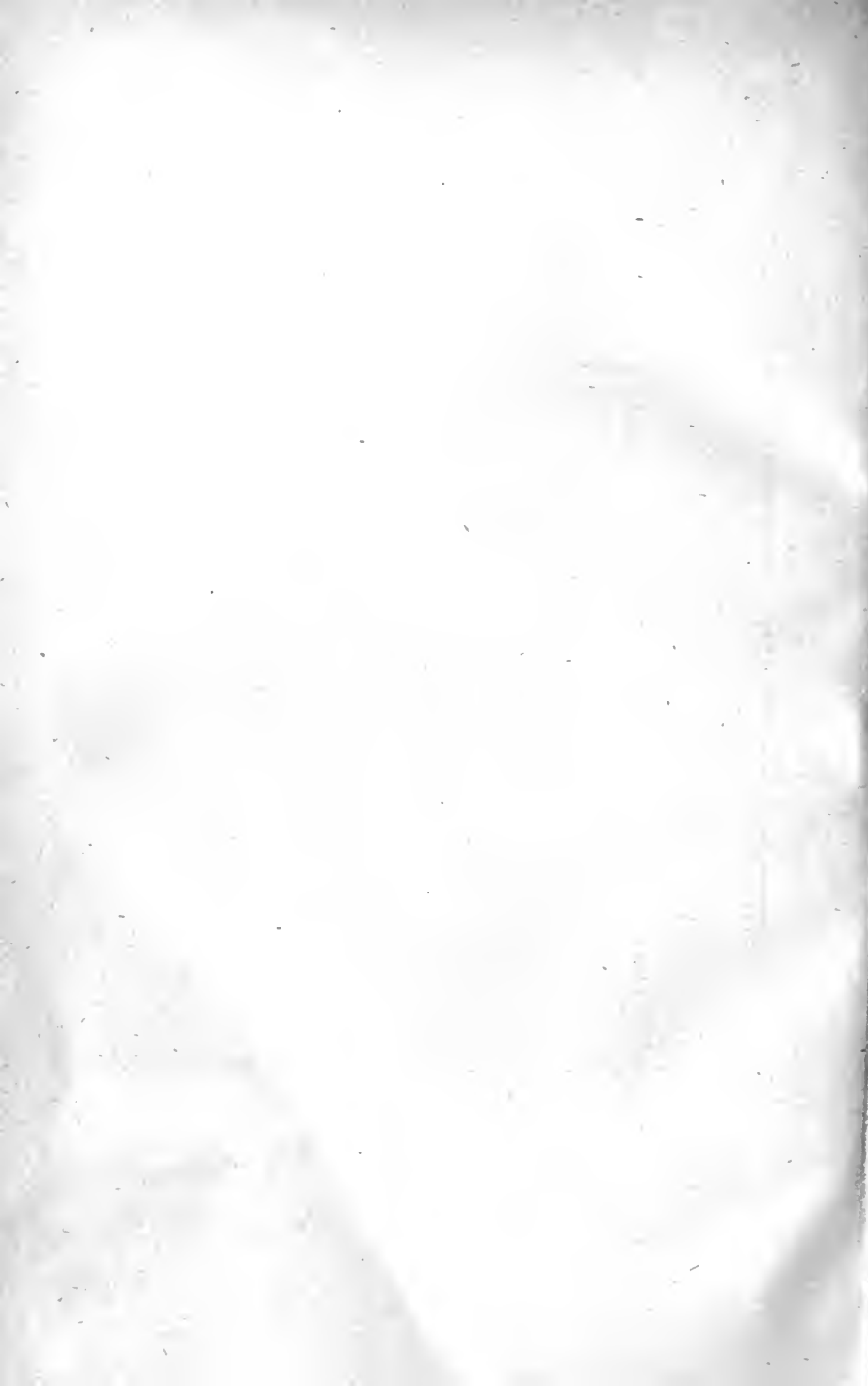


ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 119, Back.

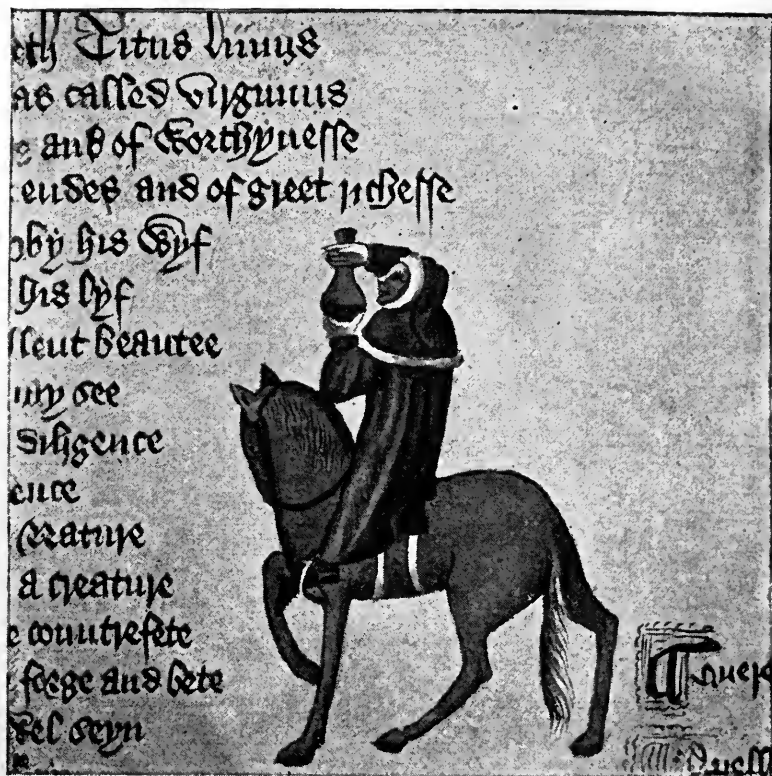








The Doctor.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 137.

The Pardoner.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 142.

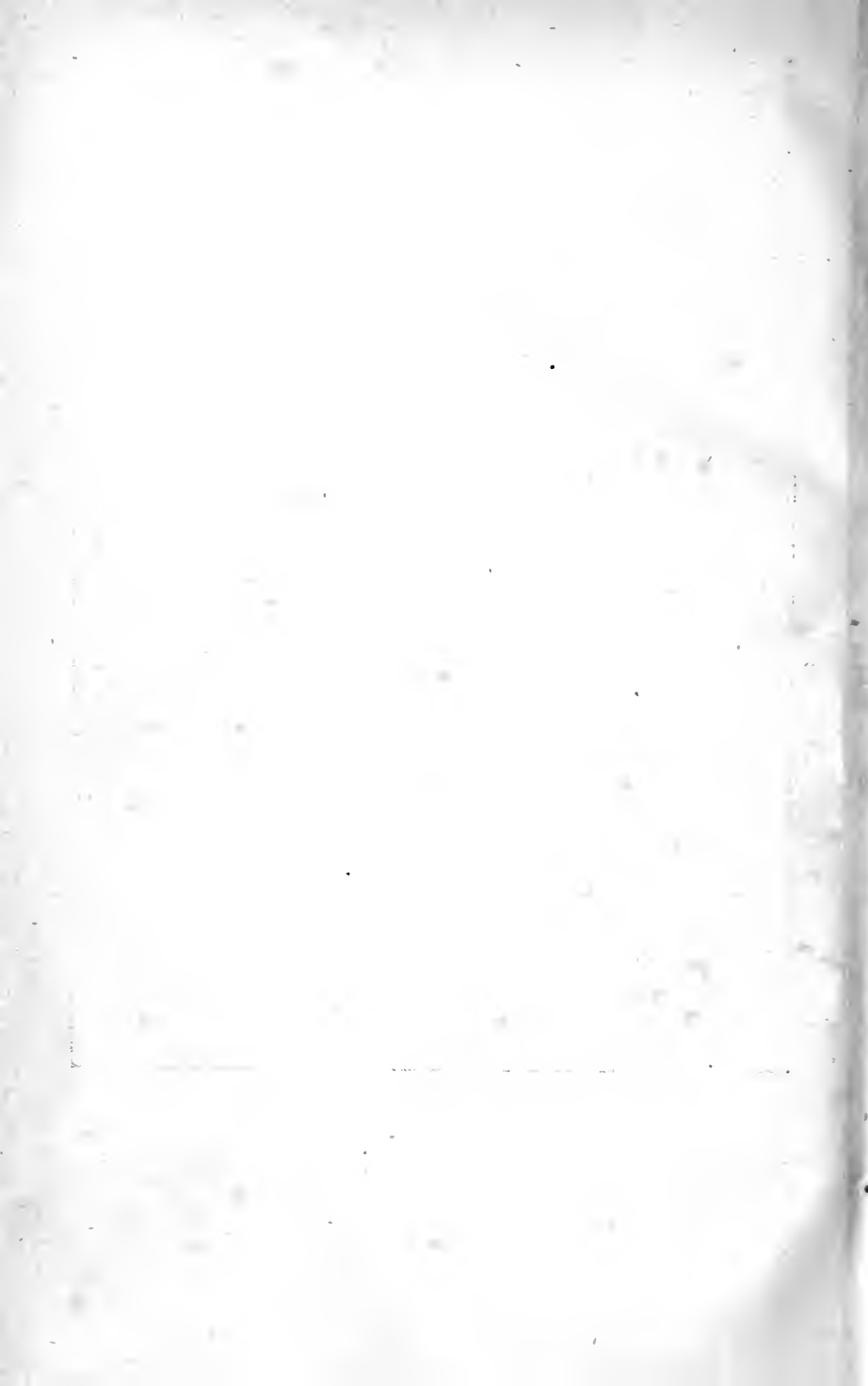


20
The Shipman.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 147, Back.



The Prioress.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 152, Back



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 157, Back.



Monk and Hound.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 173.

The Nun's Priest.

27



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 183.



The Second Nun.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 191.

The Canon's Yeoman.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 198.



The Manciple.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 207.

The Parson.



ELLESMERE MS.

Leaf 210, Back.







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